

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

1951-52

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION  
*Reshma Dhar*  
UNDER THE MUGHALS

( 1700 — 1750 )

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*Published for*  
THE CENTRE OF ADVANCED STUDY  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY  
ASIA PUBLISHING HOUSE  
BOMBAY



Cost Rs. 20.00  
Date 29.5.71

Sanjiv Singh  
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cat  
67/05

954.02  
S58L

*Based on a thesis approved for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy of the  
Aligarh Muslim University, 1960*

SBN 210. 22272. 7

PRINTED IN INDIA

AT THE I. M. H. PRESS PRIVATE LIMITED, CHANDNI CHOWK, DELHI  
AND PUBLISHED FOR THE CENTRE OF ADVANCED STUDY, DEPARTMENT  
OF HISTORY, ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY BY P. S. JAYASINGHE,  
ASIA PUBLISHING HOUSE, BOMBAY 1

TO MY PARENTS





## PREFACE

The study of the social, economic and administrative institutions of the Mughals has been increasingly attracting the attention of scholars for some time. Pioneering work by eminent historians has already been done. Nevertheless it is felt that to put the social, economic and administrative history on a scientific basis much has still to be done and fresh material, especially the documentary evidence, is to be properly studied. The work was taken up by the Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, in 1953. The present work forms part of these studies and aims at a detailed study of the land-revenue administration in the first-half of the eighteenth century. This study is mainly based on documentary evidence which has been supplemented by evidence contained in the chronicles.

This book is largely based on a doctoral thesis presented to the Aligarh Muslim University in 1959. In the course of revision some fresh evidence has been examined, and some new problems, such as the nature of the land revenue demand and its magnitude, the institution of *zamindari* and its ramifications, and the working of *wizarat* and its impact on the agrarian system, have been studied in some detail. The publication of the book was rather delayed owing to unavoidable reasons. However, the personal interest taken in its publication by Professor S. Nurul Hasan, Head of the Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, and his wife, late Mrs. Khursheed Nurul Hasan, made it possible for me to send the book to press. My grateful thanks are due to them.

In the preparation of this book I was helped and encouraged by my teachers, colleagues and friends. I wish to acknowledge their help and advice from which I benefited. My indebtedness and gratitude to Professor Sheikh Abdur Rashid, my teacher and supervisor, formerly Head of the Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, is too deep for words. His liberal outlook on life and his objective approach to the problems of history inspired me to study the source material with a detached view, as far as it was humanly possible. I also owe a debt of gratitude to my teacher, Professor S. Nurul Hasan for the critical evaluation of some of my arguments and conclusions which provoked me to examine them anew and more objectively. Again, it is my pleasant duty to remember the help and encouragement extended to me by Dr. Mrs. Asiya Siddiqi, formerly a colleague of mine, who was kind enough to go through some of the chapters of the first draft and give me valuable suggestions. Professor Satish Chandra, formerly of the Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, was always available to me to discuss the problems, I was seized of at various



stages during the preparation of the book. His ungrudging help I still remember with pleasure and gratitude.

I wish also to express my sincere thanks to Mr. Ali Ameer, formerly Secretary, U.P. Public Service Commission and the late Professor Habibur Rahman of the Aligarh Muslim University, who were gracious enough to go through the manuscript of the book and saved me from many errors of language.

In spite of the help extended to me by many scholars in the preparation of this work I am conscious of its limitations. These are entirely mine. Any suggestions to correct the facts, arguments or conclusions would be most welcome.

I am also indebted to the authorities and the Staff of the Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh, the Research Library, Department of History, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, and the U. P. State Archives, Allahabad, for allowing me to use their collections.

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## INTRODUCTION

The opening years of the eighteenth century marked the zenith of the territorial expansion of the Mughal Empire, but within the few decades following the death of Aurangzeb the Empire began to disintegrate. Political developments in the country, the wrangling of parties and groups at the Court and the weakening of the administrative system, all tended to foster the forces of disintegration. Maratha inroads into the imperial territory became a recurring feature; the Sikhs and the Jats, and even the Rajputs, on occasions, did not miss an opportunity of defying the imperial authority. The powerful nobles of the Empire set out to carve out semi-independent principalities for themselves. The struggle between groups of powerful nobles turned the Court into a hot-bed of intrigues and machinations which served to weaken the authority of the Emperor and impaired the military power and administrative stability of the Empire. Moreover, these developments were accompanied by and closely related to an ever deepening crisis in the jagirdari system. Thus the Mughal Empire was heading towards its inevitable collapse. The victory of the Persian forces in 1739 destroyed the morale and prestige of the Mughal military power and accelerated the process of decline still further.

A careful study of these developments is necessary for a proper understanding of the process whereby the Mughal Empire disintegrated. Valuable work on the political history of the period has been done by Irvine in his work *The Later Mughals*. Satish Chandra's publication, *Parties and Politics at the Mughal Court, 1707-1739*, is a valuable study with special reference to the role of the nobility. The organisation of the army has been dealt with by Irvine in his work, *The Army of the Indian Moghuls*. Valuable as these studies are in their own way, they do not clearly bring out the nature and extent of the administrative and agrarian crisis, which had become quite marked by the last quarter of the seventeenth century and tended to be acute in the first half of the eighteenth century. Moreland in his work, *The Agrarian System of Moslem India*, has devoted a chapter to the agrarian developments in the eighteenth century. But the study is brief and no attempt has been made to correlate it with the other administrative developments in the Empire. Moreover, his study is based mainly on British records and he has made little attempt to utilise contemporary Persian sources which are rich in information and enable us to reconstruct the picture of the land revenue administration in an intelligible way. The present work is essentially an attempt to fill this gap.

This book is concerned with the various aspects of the Mughal land-revenue administration in the first-half of the eighteenth century. Special



emphasis has been laid on the working of the *jagirdari* system, and its repercussions on the agricultural community and the Mughal land-revenue system have been examined. The institution of the village *zamindar* is an extremely interesting subject of study and has been dealt with at length. Similarly the system of *ijarah'dari* or revenue-farming and its actual working has been studied in detail. Attention has also been paid to the study of the institution of *madaad maash* grants and its impact on the social, religious and economic life of rural Hindustan has been examined. The study, however, has been confined to the broad features of the Mughal land-revenue administration which gave it a basic uniformity and the provincial and regional variations in the administrative practices have been excluded from its purview.

The land-revenue administration in the first-half of the 18th century was marked by certain developments which tended to weaken the administrative and financial stability of the Mughal Empire. Broadly speaking, these developments led to the virtual breakdown of the *jagirdari* system, as it was known and understood under the Great Mughals, and to the widespread practice of revenue-farming.

During the later years of Aurangzeb's reign the failure of the *jagirdari* system to adapt itself to the changing conditions was revealed by a considerable increase in the number of *mansabdars*, a corresponding decrease in the number of available *jagirs* for assignment, a highly inflated *jama*, and a keen competition among the various classes which clamoured for *mansabs* and *jagirs*. These tendencies in the *jagirdari* system continued and were accentuated in the years that followed the death of Aurangzeb. To meet the pressure of the *mansabdars* for *jagirs*, assignments were made on the *khalisa* lands, and in the early years of Muhammad Shah's reign it was discovered that the bulk of the *khalisa* lands had been assigned as *jagirs*. Even this development did not ease the situation and the recruitment of emergency forces on cash basis indicates that either the central government had ceased to exercise control over *jagirdars* or highly inflated *jama* figures had reduced the majority of *mansabdars* to financial straits under which they could not afford to maintain the requisite contingents. The total effect of these developments was that the *jagirdari* system not only failed to provide the State with a strong and efficient military service, but was also unable to provide adequate means of livelihood for a large number of *mansabdars* and horsemen who were on the pay roll of the government. Such a state of affairs created the necessary conditions for factionalism at the court, internal revolts within the Empire and frequent Maratha inroads into the imperial territory.

The crisis in the *jagirdari* system was accompanied by the wide-spread practice of revenue-farming. It appears that the practice of revenue-farming re-appeared in the reign of Jahangir, assumed larger proportions after the death of Bahadur Shah and by the reign of Farrukh Siyyar had become



very wide-spread. This development owed its origin partly to the inflated nature of the *jama* figures and partly to the growing weakness of the land-revenue administration at various levels. The effect of the wide-spread practice of revenue-farming, however, on the *zamindars* and peasants was ruinous. It gave rise to a class of bankers and speculators who invested their money in the business of revenue-farming—a class of intermediaries distinct from the hereditary *zamindars*. These revenue-farmers were either the rich and powerful *zamindars* who gradually carved out *talluqadaris* for themselves or the rich bankers from the towns who emerged as absentee landlords. The effects of the revenue-farming system on the peasants were even worse. Whether the settlement was made with the revenue-farmers or with the *zamindars* the artificial competition invariably tended to increase the magnitude of the land-revenue demand on the peasants. Driven to extremity the peasants deserted their village; consequently cultivation suffered and production declined.

Thus the agrarian crisis coupled with the crisis in the *jagirdari* system tended to impair the economic and administrative stability of the State. It also greatly weakened the military power of the Empire, so that it was left with little vitality to resist the revolts from within and aggression from outside.

This study, it is hoped, will also serve the purpose of an introduction to those who may take up the study of the land-revenue administration in the second-half of the eighteenth century. When the British took over the reorganisation of the land-revenue administration in the second-half of the eighteenth century and first-half of the nineteenth century they considered it unprofitable and unwise to disturb or destroy the institution of the *zamindari*, the agrarian relationship which it established together with many other institutions, customs and practices of land-revenue administration. This administrative decision of the British proved to be of some consequence for the political and economic history of the country. To investigate the implications and consequences of the administrative decision, however, belongs to the future historian who will continue the story where the present writer ends it.

### Sources of Study

The present work is based mainly on original Persian sources, such as administrative manuals, documents, news-letters, chronicles, contemporary works dealing with land-revenue administration and glossaries of technical terms. The evidence available in these documents has been correlated with the evidence contained in the chronicles and news-letters. These documents are valuable for a proper understanding of the structure of the land-revenue system at various levels such as those of a *suba*, *sarkar*, and *pragana*. There is an important difference between administrative manuals and the



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collections of letters and documents. The administrative manuals describe the administrative system of the Mughals more or less in a systematic way, and documents are inserted in them to illustrate the nature of the papers maintained by various officials. The collections of letters and documents, although they do not give a systematic account of the administrative system, contain *farmans*, *parwanas* *nishans*, *arzas* and orders of appointment which throw considerable light on the administrative practices under the Mughals, especially on the functions and duties of various officials and the internal working of the land-revenue administration. Another valuable feature of the administrative manuals is that they contain the *jamdami* figures for the Empire and the pay scales of the *mansabdars* and horsemen.

In order to understand the nature and origin of many institutions it has been found necessary to make a detailed study of such work as the *Ain-i-Akbari*, the *Akbar Nama*, and other important chronicles written in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The relevant evidence contained in these earlier sources has been examined and correlated with the contemporary evidence. Similarly, some Persian works compiled in the second-half of the eighteenth century and the early years of the nineteenth century such as the Glossary of the Revenue Terms by Khwaja Yasin of Delhi, the *Makhzan-i-Akhbar*, the *Diwan-i-Pasand*, the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi* Ali Khan etc., have also been utilised since they contain evidence which either corroborates or supplements the evidence available in contemporary sources, or explains some technical terms which do not find a place in contemporary or earlier sources. Some British records compiled in the second-half of the eighteenth century and in the first quarter of the nineteenth century have also been examined as they were prepared either on the basis of the original Persian records studied by the British officers who took over the administration, or were based on the personal experiences of these officers. To avoid confusion the date or period to which a particular piece of evidence relates has been indicated.

The sources examined in the course of our studies cover many important regions and provinces of the Empire. It appears that the *Khulasat-us-Siyag* deals with the administrative practices obtaining in Panjab, whereas the *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi* covers the provinces of Panjab, Delhi and Agra. The *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* was compiled in Sambhal Muradabad and may be taken as describing the administrative practices in the Sarkar Sambhal Muradabad and in the vicinity of Delhi. The Allahabad Documents, the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi* Ali Khan and the *Makhzan-i-Akhbar* relate to the province of Awadh. The *Farhang-i-Kardani*, the *Risala-i-Ziraat* and Glossary of Revenue Terms of Khwaja Muhammad Yasin deal with administrative system of Bengal. The *Waqaa-i-Suba Ajmer* and *Gwalior Nama* furnish valuable information about the administrative conditions in Ajmer and Rajputana. The *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* is a rich source of information for studying the administrative system in Gujarat. For the Deccan



useful information is available in the *Selected Documents of Shahjahan's Reign* and *Selected Waqa-i-of Deccan*, published by the *Daftar-i-Diwani*, Hyderabad.

The sources may be conveniently divided into the following categories :

1. *Allahabad Documents*
2. Collections of letters and documents
3. Administrative Manuals
4. Works dealing with technical terms and administrative practices
5. *Waqai*
6. Chronicles
7. British Records

## 1. The Allahabad Documents

A large number of *farmans*<sup>1</sup>, *parwanas*<sup>2</sup>, sale-deeds, judicial decrees etc., are preserved in the U.P. State Archives, Allahabad. I have examined about a thousand documents which cover the period from Akbar to Muhammad Shah. Almost invariably they are dated and bear the seal of some responsible officer or head of the department and as such their authenticity cannot be questioned. They contain extremely valuable information about the social, economic and administrative conditions that obtained in Awadh under the Mughals. For our purposes, however, their main interest lies in the specific information they contain about the institution of *zamindari* and *madad maash* grants. The *farmans* and *parwanas* generally deal with grants, confirmation or renewal of *madad maash* lands, whereas the sale-deeds record the sale of *zamindari* rights, and indicate that the *zamindari* rights were transferrable in their nature.

## 2. Collection of Letters and Documents

The collections of letters and documents contain personal letters exchanged between the administrative officials serving at various levels, and *arzdashts*<sup>3</sup> addressed to a prince and the emperor. They also contain a large number of such documents as *parwanas*, *nishans*<sup>4</sup>, *farmans* and letters of appointment for various offices. These letters and documents throw considerable light on the administrative procedures and practices, func-

1. *farman* : a royal order bearing the seal of the emperor.

2. *parwana* : an order issued by departmental heads such as Diwan-i-ala or *Sadr-u-Sudur* endorsing a grant of a jagir or *madad maash* land ; an order issued by an officer to his subordinate.

3. A petition or an official communication addressed by a subordinate to his superior.

4. *nishan* : an instruction, order, or communication issued by a member of the royal family to any one except the Emperor.



tions and duties of various officials at various levels and the actual working of the Mughal administrative system. Some of these collections contain rich information about the land-revenue system.

### 3. Administrative Manuals

The administrative manuals give a more or less systematic account of the Mughal administrative system and cover almost all the branches of Mughal administration. These include the works entitled *Dastur-ul-Amals* as well as such works as the *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, the *Farhang-i-Kardani* and the *Siyag Nama*. Some of these administrative manuals deal more specifically with the working of the Mughal administration at the centre, whereas others contain detailed information about the local administration. These manuals generally deal with the administrative practices and functions and duties of various officials. They contain a list of papers maintained by them, copy of the accounts maintained by the *pargana* officials, *jama* figures for the provinces together with the number of *sarkars* and *mahals* in each province and the distances between the important towns. Some of the works entitled *Dastur-ul-Amal* contain only the *jama* figures for the provinces together with the number of *sarkars* and *parganas* in each province and the distances between the important towns. The *jama* figures contained in these works are useful for making a comparative study of the ticklish problem of *jama*. Some of these manuals are extremely useful for the study of land-revenue administration and their value as a source of information has been briefly indicated.

4. Some useful information is available in a number of works which define and explain technical terms. Among these mention should be made of the *Mirat-ul-Istilah*, the *Risala-i-Ziraat* and a glossary of Revenue Terms prepared by Khwaja Muhammad Yasin of Delhi.

### 5. Waqaai

*Waqaai* or news reports sent from the provinces to the Imperial Court are a valuable and authentic source for studying the actual working of the administrative system under the Mughals. Unfortunately I have not been able to study the *waqai* and *akhbarat* available in the Jaipur archives, but I have gone through the selected *Waqaai* of Deccan published by the *Daftari-Diwani*, Hyderabad, and the transcript copy of the *Waqaai-i-Suba* Ajmer and Ranthambore available in the Research Library of the Department of History, Muslim University, Aligarh.

### 6. Chronicles

The documentary evidence has been supplemented and correlated with the evidence contained in the chronicles, printed as well as in manus-



cripts. They cover the period from the reign of Akbar to the middle of the eighteenth century. Generally the chroniclers show little interest in administrative matters but incidental references to them in the course of general narration are of considerable value as they reveal the actual working of the administrative system. Some of the chronicles, moreover, contain specific information on the Mughal land-revenue system. Among these mention should be specially made of the *Akbar Nama* the *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* and the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*. The *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* by Khafi Khan contains information about working of the central administration and especially about developments in the *jagirdari* system after the closing years of Aurangzeb's reign. The *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* is perhaps the most important chronicle, next to the *Akhbar Nama*, for studying the Mughal administrative system. It contains a large number of *farmans* and contents of imperial orders which throw light on various branches of Mughal administration, especially the *mansabdari* system and the land-revenue administration. It contains information on the duties of various officials, methods of assessments, and about the rights and interests of the agricultural community in land. The statistical account of the *jamadami* and the number of *sarkars* together with the number of *mahals*, given in the supplement, is useful for making a comparative study of the *jama* figures in detail which are also available in the *Ain*.

Similarly stray passages in other chronicles such as the *Ahwal-ul-Khwaqin*, the *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, the *Shah Nama-i-Munawwar-ul-Kalam*, the *Riyaz-us-Salatin* and the *Siyar-ul-Mutaakkhirin* contain important and useful information about the actual working of the institutions such as *jagirdari*, *zamindari*, and revenue-farming, and give a fairly good idea of the process of the administrative disintegration of the Empire. It is not possible to examine all the chronicles in detail but a list of the important chronicles along with the names of their authors and dates of their compilation will be included in the bibliography.

## 7. British Records

For a proper understanding of some of the institutions we have also drawn on British records, especially the "Selections from the Revenue Records of the Western Provinces, 1818-1821, and the documents contained in the *Studies in the Land Revenue History of Bengal, 1769-1787*", by R. B. Ramsbotham. The *Selections from the Records* contain valuable information about *zamindars*, *Muqaddams*, peasants and village servants, and at times corroborates the contemporary evidence contained in the Persian sources. The report on the office of the *Qanungo* contained in the *Studies in the Land Revenue History of Bengal* is a valuable and comprehensive study of the origin and development of the office of the *Qanungo* under the Mughals.



## CHAPTER I

### THE VILLAGE AND THE POSITION OF THE PEASANTS

#### Section I

Few will question the proposition that no history of the Indian people can be complete without an account of village and of the people who lived in it. An acquaintance with both of them is not only desirable but necessary because the bulk of the Indian population in the eighteenth century lived in the villages as at present. We can take the village as the starting point of the present study because it was here that the holders of rights and interests in the land lived and the administrative machinery operated in order to determine and collect land-revenue.

The Indian villages differed widely in character. Their landscape, produce and quality of soil as well as the composition of their inhabitants varied greatly not only from province to province but from district to district. And yet, in spite of these differences, the Indian village was a fairly well-known entity marked by many common features all over the country. Whereas the village in different parts of the Mughal empire was called *gaon*, or *deh*, in revenue records it was uniformly described as *mauza*.

#### The mauza

The primary unit of land revenue administration in the first half of the eighteenth century was the *mauza* or village. It comprised arable land, *abadi* (area under habitation), pools, grooves, nullahs, forest and waste land.<sup>1</sup> The boundaries of the village were clearly demarcated.<sup>2</sup> While there was a wide range of variation in the area of the villages, an average village had about one thousand *bighas* of arable land.<sup>3</sup> The land under cultivation was divided into plots, each marked by raised borders and the peasants identified each field by giving it a proper name,<sup>4</sup> as they sometimes do even today.

A number of villages formed a *pargana* which was a fiscal as well as a territorial unit, the number of villages in it varying from five or twelve to over six hundred.<sup>5</sup> In the revenue accounts these villages were classified

1. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, f. 41, b.

2. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 200; *Diwan-i-Pasand*, f. 7b.

3. *Diwan-i-Pasand*, f. 8.

4. *Allahabad Documents*, 302; cf. *Memoirs of Central India*, Vol. II p. 30.

5. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supplement, pp. 188-200; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shahanshahi*, ff. 84a, 93a, 97b.



under two sets of categories namely *asli*, *dakhili*,<sup>6</sup> on the one hand, and *raiya* and *taalluqa*<sup>7</sup> on the other.

According to the *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, the term *asli* signified a village which had its inhabitation intact, while *dakhili* was a term that was applied to a village whose area had been incorporated into other villages because of its having been deserted and its name forgotten.<sup>8</sup> A British officer, however, writing in the early nineteenth century, has observed that "a large village in the accounts was called *asli* or original, while the smaller ones were dependencies, *dakhili* or the incorporate".<sup>9</sup> The definitions are not necessarily incompatible. It is possible that the term *dakhili* was applied both to those villages which had been entirely deserted, their area having been incorporated into the adjoining *asli* villages, as well as to those which had dwindled to hamlets. It may be suggested that the practice of recording the number of *asli* and *dakhili* villages in the accounts furnished the local administration with some indication of ratio that subsisted between the available land and men who could be forthcoming to cultivate it.

Apart from the *asli* and *dakhili*, the villages within a *pargana* were also classified under the heads of *raiya* and *taalluqa*. The two terms, when understood properly, help us to understand some aspects of the property relationships which governed the agrarian society. A study of the relevant evidence on the point shows that the *raiya* villages or areas were those which were outside the *taalluqas* of the *zamindars* who paid *peshkash* or held land which had been exempted from land-revenue. Secondly in the *raiya* villages the imperial regulations for the assessment and collection of land revenue were fully enforced. Thirdly, within *raiya* village there was a class in the agricultural community that enjoyed certain transferable rights of property in land including the right to engage for land-revenue, which another section of the agricultural community referred to as *raaya* did not enjoy. Those who enjoyed these transferable rights were sometimes termed *raiya zamindars*. Finally in *raiya* villages individual *zamindars* would personally engage for land-revenue for their respective shares and would not allow any other person to engage on their behalf as an intermediary better known as the *taalluqadar*. On the other hand the term *taalluqa* signified, in the first place, a number of villages held by a *zamindar* who paid *peshkash* or alternatively rendered military service in lieu of *peshkash*. Secondly the *taalluqa* signified a number of villages liable to pay land-revenue for which a single individual engaged on behalf of a number of *zamindars* who owned them as a coparcenary body. Thirdly, the term

6. *Siyaq Nama*, pp. 33-43; also see *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mujmal-i-ff.* 40 b, 41 ab, 42 a; *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, ff. 23a; For *asli* and *dakhili* villages also see *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shahanshahi*, ff. 25a-27b.

7. *Siyaq Nama*, pp. 35-39.

8. *Siyaq Nama*, f. 22b.

9. *The Memoirs of Central India*, Malcolm p. 5 (f.n.).



was applied to a small or a new *zamindari* acquired through purchase. Lastly a circle or group of villages formed for administrative purposes was also known as the *taalluqa*.<sup>10</sup>

These classifications, it appears, served as an index of the agrarian conditions prevailing in a *pargana* and facilitated the work of assigning *jagirs* in accordance with the regulations laid down for various grades of *mansabdars*.<sup>11</sup>

## Section II

### The Peasants (cultivators)

Before examining the relevant evidence about the position of the peasants, furnished by the sources, it may be useful to make clear the exact sense in which we are using the word peasant. To the present writer it signifies the cultivator, who, regardless of his having enjoyed or not enjoyed occupancy rights, did not have the right either to sell or to mortgage the land tilled by him. Such a cultivator in the Persian chronicles and documents is described as *mazara*, *asami* or *raaya*. This term has been used in a different sense by Moreland, according to whom "the peasantry included the brotherhood or village *zamindars*, the peasants living in the village, and the peasants living in another village and coming in to work".<sup>12</sup> We shall use the word in a more limited sense excluding the village *zamindars*.<sup>13</sup> Our Persian authorities have clearly differentiated between persons who belonged to the socio-economic class of the *zamindars* and those who came from the unprivileged mass of the *ryots*. The land was tilled by the peasants as well as by the cultivating *zamindars* but the important difference between the two was that the one belonged to a class claiming rights and interest in land which were hereditary and transferable, whereas the other

10. For a complete discussion see Appendix A.

11. *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, ff. 7a-9b.

12. Agrarian System of Moslem India, p. 161. It has been noted by Moreland in the foot-notes that in the records the peasants forming the brotherhood are usually called village *zamindars*, *pattidars* or coparcenars (p. 161 f.n.).

13. In the records of the North Western provinces, the village *zamindar* has been defined as follows :

"The village Zamindars on the other hand, were the immemorial occupants of the soil; they cultivated generation from generation. They gave, sold and mortgaged their lands at will. They may have been bound in some cases, to a lower class of cultivators, who had by distinct engagements or long usage acquired the right of occupancy so long as they paid the customary rent. But the cultivating *ryot*, not belonging to the brotherhood of Zamindars, seems distinctly to have been viewed as the cultivators of the lands of another. He appears to have nowhere claimed more than the right of occupying the fields he cultivated and so long as he continued to cultivate them a right hereditary perhaps, but not apparently transferable by sale or gift or mortgage nor resumable if once vacated". (see *Revenue Records*, pp. 89-90).



could not put forward any such claims and even their right of occupancy could be successfully disputed.) Thus the use of the word peasant in a sense which ignores the essential difference between the two important sections of the rural community is a little misleading since it tends to ignore the basic social and economic difference which subsisted between the two classes, and which had been invariably recognised by our Persian authorities.

Normally, even in the *raiya* villages it was the *zamindar* who engaged for payment of land revenue and the government officers did not directly deal with individual peasants. The *patta* (lease deed) reproduced in the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* indicates that the *Muqaddams* or the *zamindars* engaged for the payment of land revenue.<sup>14</sup> The author of the *Diwan-i-Pasand* is more explicit on the relative positions of the peasants and *zamindars* when he says that every village had a number of *Muqaddams* or the owners (*maliks*) and subordinate to them were a few hundred persons known as *asamis* or *mazaras*. These *asamis* tilled the land and paid land revenue to the government through the *Muqaddams*.<sup>15</sup> We find elsewhere in the same source that it was a common practice to settle the land revenue with the *zamindars* and such settlement was known as *jama-i-mushakhkhas*. It was only when a *zamindar* declined, for some reason, to enter upon an engagement for the assessed land revenue that collections were made direct from the peasants on the basis of *jamabandi* (rent-roll). Such a practice was known as *amal-i-kham*.<sup>16</sup> Thus a direct relationship did not normally subsist between the government and the peasants. The settlement of land revenue was generally made with the *zamindars* and the peasants had to deal with them. However, the relationship between the *zamindars* and the peasants was governed by certain regulations laid down by the government. An examination of these regulations or instructions not only throws light on the relationship that subsisted between the *zamindars* and the peasants but also on the nature of the rights enjoyed by the peasants in land.

### Peasants' rights

The peasants did not enjoy such rights as the right to sell and the right to mortgage land. At least the available evidence does not indicate any such rights. Nevertheless, the regulations contained in one of the sources indicate that some of the peasants enjoyed occupancy rights. The

14. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 67a-86b; also see *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid* ff. 27b, 28ab.

15. *Diwan-i-Pasand*, f. 7b.

16. *Ibid*, f. 15 ab; cf. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi Ali Khan*, f. 8b. The collecting officer is instructed not to make collections direct from the peasants (*bahsil-i-kham*) of any village, unless it was unavoidable.



*Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* contains a *muchalka* or undertaking given by the *zamindars* or Muqaddams which throws light on this point. It gives an insight into the relationship that subsisted between the *zamindars* and peasants and defines their reciprocal rights and interests. A summary of the points made in the document is given below<sup>17</sup>:

1. That they (*zamindars*) had engaged for the estimated *jama* of the said amount for the whole year assessed on the basis of standing crops, and that they would collect the assessed *jama* from individual peasants in accordance with the entries showing the area under crops noted against them.
2. That they would not collect anything except the land-revenue per *bigha* from the peasants.
3. That they would not cause any peasant to leave the village.
4. That if, for some reason or other, a peasant left the village the *zamindars* would collect the proceeds from his holdings and remit them to the treasury. The balance of the land-revenue, whatever it might be, would be equally distributed among all the peasants.
5. That the *zamindars* would induce the peasants who had left the village to return in the following year, and would re-settle them in the village and persuade them to cultivate their holdings.
6. If the peasant did not settle in the village, his holdings would be divided in accordance with the *zamindar's* proportionate contribution and they would bring such land under cultivation.
7. That they would not demand free service for ploughing their own fields etc., in excess of the customary quota.
8. That they would not ruin the *ryots*.

The undertaking deals, in the main, with three aspects of the agrarian relationship, namely the question of assessment and collection, the occupancy rights of the peasants and his feudal obligation of personal service to the *zamindars*. Taking the provisions contained in the undertaking at their face value it is obvious that the peasants in the first-half of the eighteenth century cannot be described as helpless tenants-at-will. They tilled the land under certain terms and conditions. The assessment of land-revenue against individual peasants was made by government officers and the amount payable by each peasant was duly shown in the assessment accounts. The *zamindars'* right was confined to the collection of land-revenue as shown in the account, and it was specifically laid down that they should not collect anything from the peasants in excess of the fixed land-revenue. In other words, the separation of the work of assessment and collection went a long way towards protecting the rights and interests of the peasants. The peasants also appear to have enjoyed security against unlawful ejection, and the oc-

17. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 66ab.



occupancy rights enjoyed by them could not be normally violated. As a matter of fact the occupancy right of a peasant remained un-affected even during his absence from the village, provided he returned within a specified period.<sup>18</sup> Whether these stipulations, inserted in the undertaking, were implemented in actual practice or were ignored by the *zamindars* is a matter of conjecture. There is nothing on record to show that cases of the violation of these provisions were reported to the government and that necessary action was taken to redress the wrong. Nevertheless, the fact that such an undertaking on the part of the *zamindars* was a regular administrative practice serves to indicate that the rights and interests of the peasants were not only well-known but that they were also duly recorded. The peasants were aware of their rights and could approach the authorities to enforce them. We can also infer that the government was fully conscious of the privileged position of the *zamindars* who could abuse it and oppress the peasants. On the whole thereby such undertaking served as a deterrent against any possible excesses committed by the *zamindars*.<sup>19</sup>

### Peasants and the zamindars

One of the provisions indicates that the peasants were required to render a certain amount of personal service to the *zamindars*. Such service which was rendered free was determined and its limit was prescribed by local custom. It appears to have been a legacy from the remote past in which the local ancestors of the *zamindars* and the peasants stood in feudal relationship with each other. Nevertheless the Indian peasant in the eighteenth century can be regarded as a free individual who tilled the land on certain terms and conditions and paid a part of the produce to the government through the *zamindars*. These terms and conditions were specified in a document known as the *patta*, which was issued by the *zamindars* to the peasants. We learn from the *Dastur-ul-Amal* of Mahdi Ali Khan that the *zamindars* and revenue farmers who engaged for land-revenue were required to issue the *pattas* specifying the amount of land revenue, the methods of

18. Some confirmatory evidence relating to occupancy right is also available in the *Dastur-ul-Amal* of Mahdi Ali Khan. The first of the regulations contained in the *Dastur-ul-Amal* lays down that ryots who held their land in hereditary rights for a long time should not be ousted from the village. They should under no circumstances be ejected from the hereditary land occupied by the family of the peasant for a long time. Such land could, however, be resumed if a peasant withdrew his claim of his own accord. The land so abandoned should be given to some one who held land in hereditary rights. (*Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi Ali Khan* f. 1b).

19. In actual practice the question of ejection did not arise, as late as the first quarter of the nineteenth century. "In point of fact the question has never come fairly to issue between the *zamindar* and the ryots. Land being more abundant than labour, the resident ryots are still, practically speaking, able to protect themselves against the excessive exactions. (*Revenue Records*, p. 96).



assessment such as *naqdi* or *baholi* and to give an undertaking that they would not collect anything in excess of the stipulated amount.<sup>20</sup>

It appears that the peasants were also given receipts for the amount they paid as land revenue and that these receipts were given by the Patwaris.<sup>21</sup> The evidence contained in a document relating to the province of Awadh indicates that in certain areas it was a well-established practice to write down the terms and conditions on which the land was held by the peasants. This document is a deed of acceptance executed in the 29th regnal year of Muhammad Shah on behalf of Patta and Zanda, peasants of village Korna Chaura, Pargana Sandila. It says that they acquired of their own accord 32 *bighas* and 10 *biswas* of land against the land-revenue amounting to Rs. 192/3 annas payable for three years from 1154 *fasli* to 1156 *fasli* (1747-1749 A.D.) and that the said amount was over and above the *dami* and *satarhi* dues. They also affirmed that the said amount would be paid punctually at the end of every season and every year. In case the crops were damaged on account of some natural calamity, they would be entitled to deductions in accordance with the established practice in the *pargana*.<sup>22</sup> The break-up of the total amount of Rs. 192/3 as in annual instalments is given below<sup>23</sup>:

<i>Year</i>	<i>Amount</i>
1154 <i>fasli</i>	Rs. 64/1
1155 <i>fasli</i>	Rs. 64/1
1156 <i>fasli</i>	Rs. 64/1

Thus the terms and conditions on which the land was held by the peasants were specified. This specification included the area of cultivable land acquired by the peasants, the total amount of land-revenue with its break-up in instalments, the duration of the agreement, and the provision for necessary deductions in case the crops were damaged. Two points in the documents, however, are not in conformity with the nature of the relationship with which we have been so far familiar. In the first place, it is important to note that initially the revenue assessment was made for three years in respect of the area of land specified in the document and held by the peasants, the land revenue for each of the three years being equal in amount. As such in reaching an agreement no reference was made to the actual area under cultivation, the nature of crops sown or the condition of crops in the successive seasons. In other words, the amount mentioned in the document was in the nature of a fixed rent on the land and not land

20. *Dastur-ul-Amal* of Mahdi Ali Khan, f. 3a.

21. *Dastur-ul-Amal* of Mahdi Ali Khan, f. 3a.

22. *Allahabad Documents*, No. 324.

23. *Allahabad Documents*, No. 324.



revenue assessed on the crops which was the usual practice under the Mughals. We can also infer that the land-revenue to be paid by the peasants was a matter of bargain between them and the *zamindars* and that the land-revenue was not assessed by government officers as was the usual practice. The reference to the *pargana* custom may, however, be construed to imply that in reaching the settlement the local rates fixed by the government were kept in view by both the parties. Another important point which is not corroborated by similar evidence has been described as something over and above the *dami* and *satarhi* dues or the *zamindar's* perquisites allowed by the government on the total collections made by them. It is difficult to interpret the evidence under examination with any amount of certainty, but we may suggest that the evidence relates to a particular type of revenue arrangement in a certain area. The stipulated amount represented the land-revenue demand to be collected by the *zamindar* and remitted to the government treasury, whereas the amount to be collected under the heads *dami* and *satarhi* was to be appropriated by the *zamindars* as their perquisites. The evidence seems to suggest that in certain areas the *zamindari* dues were not paid out of the total collections but were separately charged by the *zamindars* as their perquisites. *in*

Another document dated 9th *Rajab* 1088 A.H. 1678-79 is entitled 'copy of the *Tamassuk*'.<sup>24</sup> It says that Kanhya and Raghunath, the Muqaddams of village Chader, affirmed that the said village and the village Sansi and Lalupur were held in *milkiyat* rights by Muhammad Sharif Chaudhri and that they were his *mazaras* or peasants and tilled the land with his consent. The document was executed in order to serve as a *sanad*. The important point that emerges from the text is the fact that it was necessary to obtain the consent of the *zamindar* for tilling the land. The peasants referred to in the document may be taken to represent a type of peasants who did not hold land in hereditary rights and therefore obtained the consent of the *zamindar* for cultivating the land. Such an interpretation implies that the *zamindars* enjoyed the right to give a certain type of land to the peasants for cultivation. It follows that the peasants who held such land were at the mercy of the *zamindars* and could be ejected whenever the *zamindars* chose to do so.

### Types of the peasants

Evidence available in a work compiled in the late eighteenth century indicates that in Bengal the cultivators were divided into three classes, namely the *pattadar* ryots, *fasli* ryots and *pai kasht* ryots. The *pattadar* ryots seem to have enjoyed a superior position because they engaged for ten *bighas*

24. *Allahabad Documents*; No. 329.  
*Tamassuk*, a deed of agreement



of land and paid land-revenue for it but actually cultivated 15 *bighas*. As such they were men of some means. The *fasli* ryots engaged every year for the land they brought under cultivation and paid the land-revenue for it. They have been described as being without any means. Non-resident cultivators were known as *pai kasht* and paid land revenue for the land cultivated by them.<sup>25</sup> The evidence suggests that hereditary ryots, *pattdaar* ryots and *khudkasht* ryots belonged to a privileged class of cultivators who enjoyed occupancy rights and whose holdings were assessed at rates comparatively lower than those demanded from the *fasli* and *pai kasht* ryots.)

### Position of the peasants

The position held by the peasants in the village can now be summed up. (Direct relationship does not appear to have subsisted between the peasants and the government, because it was the *zamindar* who engaged for land revenue. However, in case the *zamindar* declined to do so collections were made direct from individual peasants. Generally the assessment against individual peasants was made by government officers but land revenue was collected by the *zamindar*.) However, variations in practice cannot be ruled out and in certain areas the assessment of land revenue against the individual peasants was a matter of mutual agreement between the peasants and the *zamindars*.

Our investigations also show that the peasants did not enjoy such rights as the right to sell or the right to mortgage. However a section of the peasants referred to as *maurusi* claimed certain rights which may be described as occupancy rights. They could not be normally ejected and their holdings were inherited by their descendants. At the same time there were peasants who tilled the land with the consent of the *zamindars* and could be ejected when the *zamindars* chose to do so. As a matter of fact the peasants could be classified into a number of grades and categories and their prescriptive rights as well as economic condition differed and varied from locality to locality.

(The execution of the *patta* and the *qubuliat* also appears to have been a well-established practice in certain areas of the country) where the terms and conditions on which the land was held by the peasants were specified. We are not in a position to say whether the practice was wide-spread or confined to certain regions. But wherever it was in existence the chances of unauthorised exactions and oppression were greatly curtailed.

25. *Risala-i-Ziraat*, f. 9b. cf. *Agrarian System*, p. 161.

"Non-resident peasants were called as they still are called, *pai-kasht*, but with varied spelling (e.g. *pyokoost*). Resident peasants were called either as now *cahpparband* or else *khudkasht* (f. n. p. 161.)



### Condition of the peasants

Before we end the discussion of the subject, we may briefly refer to the condition of the peasants in the first half of the eighteenth century. The magnitude of land-revenue demand will be discussed in some detail in a separate chapter. Here it will suffice to note that it varied from place to place and region to region. Broadly speaking the peasant had to pay from one-third to one-half of the produce according to the productivity of the land which varied from place to place. He had also to pay something over and above the original land-revenue demand (*mal*) in the form of cesses and perquisites which were collected from him under various heads in order to meet the expenses incurred in connection with the assessment and collection of land-revenue<sup>26</sup>. It appears that cesses such as the *talbana* and the *shahgai* were realised from the *zamindars* who generally shifted the burden on to the peasants<sup>27</sup>. The commission received by the *Qanungos* and the *Chaudhris* was also realised from the ryots. The *Qanungo* of a *sarkar*, we are told, was entitled to get a commission of 2% on the share of the ryots, and the *Chaudhri's* perquisites were fixed at 1% of the same share<sup>28</sup>. Moreover, the administrative conditions during the period had adversely affected the interests of the agricultural community, especially of the peasants.

A passage contained in the *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid* gives an insight into the adverse effects of the administrative set-up on the interests of the peasants and deserves to be reproduced at length. The passage is entitled, "On the Way of *Zamindari*". It gives an account of the agrarian conditions that prevailed in the *raiya* and *zortalab* areas. Important posts, we are told, were assigned to *mansabdars* who held small ranks and who were allowed a small number of soldiers to help them in the collection of land-revenue. This small force was generally insufficient to overawe the rebels (those who refused to pay the revenue and who could be subdued only with the demonstration or actual use of force). In order to gain promotion these officers, although placed in a difficult situation, were keen to show an increase in the *jama*. Consequently they ascertained all the resources of the estates owned by the *raiya zamindars* and assessed them heavily. The *zamindars* in their turn shifted the burden on to the ryots who groaned. Driven to extremity, they left the *raiya* areas and settled down in territories held by the *zortalab zamindars*. In consequence the territories of *zortalab zamindars* tended to be well populated and prosperous while the *raiya zamindars* were reduced to poverty and could not pay land-revenue<sup>29</sup>.

26. *Siyag Nama*, pp. 33, 34.

27. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi Ali Khan*, f. 13.a.

28. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 42-44a.

29. *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, ff. 64b-66b.



The evidence adduced above shows that, on the whole, the peasants in the *raiya* areas were heavily assessed and were subjected to considerable oppression. This led to their flight to areas where they enjoyed comparative freedom from oppression. It is, however, hazardous to generalise on the basis of the fragmentary evidence which is available, although it provides a fair index of the agrarian conditions during the period. Any effective generalisation will have to be substantiated by evidence from other parts of the empire.

The wide-spread practice of *ijara*, which we propose to examine in a separate chapter, similarly tended to effect adversely the interests of the peasants. On the whole the period lacked administrative stability and this was hardly conducive to their well-being. An average peasant could not, therefore, be a man of any considerable means. Generally he lived from hand to mouth. It is very difficult to form a definite idea of the average income of ordinary peasants. This depended on several factors, namely the caste of the peasants, the type of the village, whether the village *zamindars* lived in an adjoining village and the entire land in the village in question was tilled by the peasants, the pressure of land determining the area of the average holding and the integrity of the *Amil*. These facts will have to be investigated on a regional basis before we can arrive at any definite conclusion about the conditions of the peasants. At present all that we can say is that there were many gradations among the peasants. Whereas the majority of them were poor, there were some peasants who enjoyed certain rights in land and were men of some means or what is known in rural Uttar Pradesh as *haisiyatdar* (literally men of means). In fact these inferences are supported by evidence contained in the *Risala-i-Ziraat*. We are told that the *pattadar* ryots were man of some means, whereas the *fasli* ryots were destitute<sup>30</sup>.

### Village servants

We have seen that an ordinary village contained the village *zamindars*, the peasants, the landless labourers and the village servants, who, in certain areas, are still known as the *khidmati parja*. They served the entire village community, especially the *zamindars* and the peasants forming the agricultural community of the village. The Persian records furnish no account of the village servants, except that of the *Patwari*, but the important village servants have been mentioned in the reports of the revenue officers in the early nineteenth century. The description of the village servants contained in the British records is corroborated by the presence of hereditary village servants even today in most of the villages in the Uttar Pradesh. Important among the village servants appear to have been the *lohar* or blacksmith, the *barhai* or carpenter, the *naee* or barber and the *dhobi* or washer-

30. *Risalah-i-Ziraat*, f. 9b.



man<sup>31</sup>. In some villages the sweeper also came under the head of village servants. Generally village servants were paid in kind and the practice continues even today. According to the report submitted by the Collector of Agra "for every plough on the estate it is customary, for the following persons<sup>32</sup>, who comprise the village establishment, to receive from the tenants 10 *seers* of grain *adhyya* (*seer*) on each *khet*<sup>33</sup> (field)." It appears that in some villages the *saqqah* or water carrier was also employed and was paid the same quantity of grain<sup>34</sup>. The *dhonook* or village watchman was paid either in the form of grain or of the grant of rent-free land<sup>35</sup>. The *bhangee* or sweeper was also granted some land but generally speaking the custom was for each house to give him daily a *rotee* or cake<sup>36</sup>.

### Patwari

The Patwari or the village accountant was an important functionary. His duties are specified in the *Ain-i-Akbari*. Later documents hardly indicate any changes in the functions attached to the office of the Patwari. Under the Mughals the Patwari was the village writer or accountant. Each village, we are told by Abul Fazl, had one Patwari. He was employed on behalf of the agriculturists<sup>37</sup>, and was paid 1% commission on the collections made under the head *sad-doi* of Patwari<sup>38</sup>. His functions were to take and to record measurements operations along with the Muqaddam and Karkun and to attest the consolidated accounts of assessment<sup>39</sup>. He was also associated with the work of collection and entered in detail the collections made from the ryots in a memorandum or *sarkhat* which was handed over to the peasants<sup>40</sup>. He was authorised to collect money and deposit it in the pargana treasury<sup>41</sup>. He maintained the *nuskha-i-taujih* or the accounts of assessment and of receipts and arrears<sup>42</sup>. We find elsewhere that the Patwari maintained in the local language a complete account of all collections made by the Amil. The account was known as *kaghazi-i-kham* which was translated into Persian by a regular staff in order to detect

31. *Selections : Revenue Records*, p. 278.

32. The village establishment comprised : blacksmith, carpenter, barber, washerman (*Revenue Selections*, p. 278).

33. *Selections : Revenue Records*, p. 278.

34. *Ibid*

35. *Ibid* p. 278; in certain areas the pascers served as village watchmen.

36. *Ibid*, p. 278 ;

37. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 209.

38. *Ibid*, I, p. 209, *sad-doi* literally means a rate of two percent.

39. *Ibid*, p. 199.

40. *Ibid*, p. 199.

41. *Ibid*, p. 200.

42. *Ibid*, p. 200.



any misappropriation by the Amil<sup>43</sup>.

It appears that in the early years of the nineteenth century the Patwari was paid by the *zamindar* who, in his turn, collected a tax, known as *dami* from the peasants at the rate of six pies per rupee as the Patwari's dues<sup>44</sup>. In a document dated 1154 *fasli* we read about the *dami* collected by the *zamindar* from the peasants at the rate of one *fulus* per bigha which was in excess of the *sattarhi* or *zamindari* dues<sup>45</sup>. If the *dami* under reference is identified with the *dami* described in the Revenue Selections as the Patwari's dues collected by the *zamindars*, we may infer that in the first half of the eighteenth century the Patwari was actually paid by the peasants through the *zamindar*.

43. *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, ff. 43-44a.

44. *Selections : Revenue Records*, pp. 278-79.

45. *Allahabad Documents*, No. 329. The document under reference says that the rates for *dami* were the same as in the past.



## CHAPTER II

### ZAMINDAR AND ZAMINDARI

#### Section I

##### Main features of the institution

The institution of *zamindari* occupied a pivotal position in the Mughal revenue system and represented in fact a variety of superior interests in the land or its usufruct. By and large, the *zamindars* were not the tillers of the soil but they had a claim to a share in the produce. The nature of *zamindari* rights and interests differed from place to place, and even within the same region or locality different types of *zamindari* rights could be found. On the whole, these rights and interests were permanent in nature and held hereditarily. Most of these rights could be traced back to conquest or colonization while some were acquired at a later stage through purchase. Not infrequently the Mughal government itself conferred *zamindari* rights of different types.

This class of *zamindars* as such showed definite signs of stratification within itself but as a class it enjoyed a superior status to, and was distinct from, the mass of the cultivating peasants who tilled the soil and were known as *asami* or *ryots*. Thus the term *zamindari* was a loose term and was applied to persons who held land on different conditions. For instance, it was applied to a person who held his hereditary *zamindari* or principality on the condition of paying a fixed *peshkash* or tribute; it also signified a person who did not pay any *peshkash* for his ancestral *zamindari* but he held it as a *jagir* in lieu of the salary appertinent to his rank in the imperial service. A person could also be vested with *zamindari* rights along with a rank by virtue of a royal order which appointed him as the *zamindar* of a certain area to which he could not lay any hereditary claims. Again the term *zamindar* denoted a person who enjoyed certain rights and interests appertaining to land including the right to engage for the *mal-wajib* or land revenue fixed on the basis of a detailed assessment. Among the *zamindars* were also included persons who were described a *talluqadars*.

Apart from the varying terms and conditions on which different types of *zamindaris* were held they also differed widely in their extent. A *zamindari*, subject to the payment of *malwajib*, might constitute only a share in one or more than one village. Again such a *zamindari* might comprise a number of villages held by a single individual or a number of co-sharers. *Zamindaris* subject to the payment of land-revenue or *mal-wajib* comprising a number



of villages, a *pargana* or more than a *pargana* were also common<sup>1</sup>. Similarly a *zamindari* paying a fixed *peshkash* might comprise a few villages, a *pargana*, a number of *parganas*, a *sarkar* or even an area larger than a *sarkar*. The *taalluqas* like-wise differed widely in the number of villages comprising them.

The *zamindars* who recognised the suzerainty of the Mughal Emperor and have been described as vassal chiefs or *rajas* can be classified into more than one category. In the first place, there were *zamindars* or *rajas* who recognised the suzerainty of the Mughal Emperor but were exempted from military or financial obligations. This recognition was implied in the circulation of the Mughal currency within their territory. Secondly, there were those *zamindars* who acknowledged the overlordship of the Emperor and were allowed to retain their principalities provided they paid a fixed *peshkash* or agreed to render military service to the *Nazim* of the province. Some of these were enrolled as *mansabdars* and their *zamindaris* were treated as *jagirs* in lieu of salary pertaining to their ranks in the imperial service, subject to regulations laid down for branding and verifications<sup>2</sup>. Under special circumstances, a *zamindar* holding a *mansab* would be exempted from these regulations but he was required to serve the provincial governor with a fixed number of *sawars*<sup>3</sup> whenever his services were required.

The *zamindars* who acknowledged the nominal suzerainty of the Mughal Emperor and were exempted from military or financial obligations do not fall under the scope of the present study. Their relationship with the Mughal State was of a political and military nature.

### The *peshkashi* *zamindars* :

The *zamindars* who paid *peshkash* or tribute have been described in our sources as *peshkashi*<sup>4</sup>, *muqarrari*<sup>5</sup> and *ghair amali*<sup>6</sup>. There was a clear distinction between a *zamindar* who paid *peshkash* and one who paid *mal-wajib*. The *zamindar* of Bir Bhum used to pay only a fixed *peshkash*. In

1. Bengal District Records Rangpur, Vol. VI, 1786-87, pp. 32, 82, 83; Bengal District Records Dinajpur, 1786-88, pp. 78, 171, 174, 175; The Records of the Government of Bengal, 1769-1770, pp. 68, 78; Revenue Chiefs of Bihar, pp. 22-31. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 50a-51b. *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, pp. 305-306.

2. Provincial Administration of the Mughals, Saran, pp. 114, 133, 136; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. pp. 199, 224, 227, 228, 229, 230.

3. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. 239; *Iqbal Nama*, p. 119.

4. *Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani*, f. 27a; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. p. 128.

5. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 768, *Siyar-ul-Mutaakib*, p. 305.

6. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, pp. 190, 192, 200, 203, 307. It may be pointed out that villages held by *zamindars* who paid *peshkash* have been referred to as *ghair amali*. The adjective has been used to describe a *zamindari* for which *peshkash* was paid, cf. *Adad-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 119b, 120a.



the reign of Muhammad Shah he was compelled to pay *mal-wajib*<sup>7</sup>. The *mal-wajib* is a familiar term signifying land-revenue determined on the basis of actual measurement of land under cultivation or on the basis of previous records of the yields and revenue of individual villages. Thus a *peshkashi zamindari* was not subject to the detailed assessment of land actually under cultivation.

The evidence contained in the supplement to the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* throws some light on the origin, nature, subsequent development, and actual position of *peshkashi zamindars* in the first half of the eighteenth century. A careful examination and analysis of the evidence<sup>8</sup>, contained in the source referred to above, shows that in the first half of the eighteenth century, the province of Gujrat was divided into two categories of *sarkars* namely the *peshkashi* and the *khiraji sarkars*. Of the sixteen *sarkars* in the province ten are described as *khiraji*<sup>9</sup> and the remaining six as *peshkashi*<sup>10</sup>. It appears that when the province of Gujrat was conquered, the six *sarkars* of Dongrapur, Bansballah, Sont, Sirohi, Sulaiman Nagar known as Kach and Ram Nagar were left in the possession of their *zamindars*. However, the *zamindars* in these *sarkars* were required to render military service with a fixed quantum of contingent under the *Nazim* of the province. By the closing year of Aurangzeb's reign, they had ceased to render military service to the *Nazim*<sup>11</sup>. The other ten *sarkars* have been described as *khiraji*. These *sarkars* as a whole were subject to the payment of land revenue determined on the basis of detailed assessment, and they were also administered by the Mughal officers. However, within these *sarkars* there were pockets of land, villages and even *parganas* which were held by *zamindars* who paid *peshkash* instead of *mal wajib*. The *zamindars* who held a number of villages or an entire *pargana* and paid *peshkash* were known as *ismi zamindars*<sup>12</sup>.

7. *Siyyar-ul-Mutaakbbirin*, p. 305.

8. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. p. 188.

9. *Khiraji Sarkar* signifies that in these *sarkars* the bulk of the land was subject to detailed assessment on the basis of village accounts and the *jama* figures are given in *demi*. *Peshkashi sarkars* were in the possession of *zaminadrs* who paid *peshkash* when compelled to do it.

10. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. p. 188.

11. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. p. 188.

12. This peculiar pattern of land revenue administration was a legacy from the Sultans of Gujrat. It appears that when the Muslims conquered Gujrat, there were strong tribal settlements of the Kolis and the Rajputs in the province. Under the rule of the Sultans the Rajputs and the Kolis were subdued and they agreed to render military service and pay *malguzari* or land-revenue. The arrangement for the collection of the government's share of the produce was made in a peculiar way. It was settled that one-fourth of their *watans* and villages should be left to them for their maintenance which came to be known as *banth*. However, they were required to pay a fixed amount as *salami* from the income they derived from the *banth* lands. Consequently *zamindaris* of various sizes were created, comprising a village, more than a village and even a *pargana*. The *zamindars* who held a number of



Thus there appear to have been three categories of *peshkashi zamindars* namely the *zamindars* of an entire *sarkar*, the *zamindar* of an entire *pargana* or a large number of villages known as *ismi zamindars* and petty *zamindars* who held only a few villages. The *peshkashi zamindars* of a *pargana* apparently stood on a par with the *sarkar zamindars* but there are indications that the imperial control on these *zamindars* was greater than on the *sarkar zamindars*. It appears that the *sarkar zamindars* were autonomous chiefs, and the Mughal government hardly interfered in the internal administration of their territories. But the *zamindaris* of the *pargana zamindars* (*ismi zamindars*) were subject to some degree of control by the imperial authority. This inference is based on a brief note about the *zamindar* of Raj Pipla who has been included among the *ismi zamindars*. We are told that a *Qazi*, a *Waqai Nigar* and a *Desai* were appointed in the *zamindari* of Raj Pipla. The appointment of the *Desai* was resented by the *zamindar* and the *Desai* was killed. This led to military action against him and he was compelled to submit and offer *peshkash* or indemnity<sup>13</sup>. We may infer that the Mughal system of judiciary was also enforced. The appointment of the *Desai* suggests that he kept an eye on the revenue accounts and could interfere effectively if the occasion demanded it. Moreover, the *pargana* held by an *ismi zamindar* would generally lie in the jurisdiction of an imperial *Faujdar* and as such would be subject to his supervision and control<sup>14</sup>. The smaller *zamindars* would obviously be under the jurisdiction of the *Faujdar* of the administrative unit in which their *zamindaris* were situated.

All the *peshkashi zamindars* did not necessarily bear the title of *Raja*, nor were they all Hindus<sup>15</sup>. There seems to be no justification for the assumption that a *peshkashi zamindari* was always very extensive. Whereas some of the *zamindaris* or the majority of them remained intact and were inherited by a single individual as *raj* or state others appear to have been divisible in accordance with the law of inheritance<sup>16</sup>. Sometimes a number of *ghair amali* villages were held by more than one *zamindar*<sup>17</sup>. Thus even those *zamindars* who paid *peshkash* can be classified into more than one category and the position and privileges enjoyed by these *zamindars* differed within wide limits on account of the origin and subsequent history of individual *zamindaris*.

villages or an entire *pargana* were known as *ismi zamindars* and were required to render military service. Akbar, it appears, continued the old practice and the *salami* came to be known as *peshkash*. By the first half of the 18th century, the *ismi zamindars* withheld military service and paid *peshkash* to the Nazim. (*Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. pp. 224, 225).

13. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. p. 233.

14. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. pp. 200, 201, 210, 211, 214.

15. *Riyaz-us-Salat*, pp. 305, 306; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. p. 201.

16. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. p. 201.

17. *Ibid*, pp. 191, 192.



The account of the *peshkashi zamindars*, given above, is borne out by the statistical account of the *sarkars* and *parganas* of Suba Ahmedabad. It shows that even within *sarkars* which have been described as *khiraji* there were groups of villages, varying in number from 7 to 290 or so, a *pargana* or even more than a *pargana* which were held by *ghair amali zamindars* who paid *peshkash*.<sup>18</sup> The villages described as *ghairamali* were distinguished by the following features :

1. Government officers did not measure the land of these villages for the purpose of assessing land-revenue.
2. Assessment records were not furnished to the local administration by the *zamindars*.
3. Information about the number of villages within a *pargana* was not available in the records office in case the entire *pargana* was held by the *zamindars*.
4. The *zamindars* were required to pay *peshkash* which might be a fixed amount or a matter of bargaining between the collecting officer and the *zamindars*.
5. In *parganas* where only a number of villages were held by the *ghair amali zamindars*, the *jama dami* figures were given only for those villages which were *rai-yati*.
6. In case an entire *pargana* was *ghair amali*, the *jamadami* figures were given but the amount was collected as *peshkash*.

The account also shows that within the *khiraji sarkars* there were three types of *parganas* :

1. *Parganas* in which there were no *ghair amali* villages or *peshkashi zamindari*.
2. *Parganas* which were entirely under the *ghair amali zamindars* and even the number of villages in those *parganas* was not available in the Mughal revenue records.
3. *Parganas* in which there were a number of *ghair amali* villages held by the *zamindars*. The number of such villages varied within wide limits in different *parganas* from 7 to 290 or even more.<sup>19</sup>

### Taalluqadars

*Taalluqadars*

The *taalluqadars* also belonged to the class of *zamindars*. The terms *taalluqa* and *taalluqadar*, however, were used in more than one sense in different parts of the Empire. A work compiled in the early 19th century contains the various usages of the two terms which are corroborated in the main by similar evidence available elsewhere. The various types of

18. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. pp. 188-198.

19. See Appendix 'B'



*taalluqas* described and defined in the work are as follows<sup>20</sup> :

1. The *taalluqa* was created by the government officials for the purpose of administrative expediency.
2. It signified a tenure which entitled a person of some means to manage the *zamindari* of a poor man and be accountable for land-revenue to the government.
3. A tenure held by a small *zamindar*, who had acquired some influence with the government, on behalf of other *zamindars* who authorised the holder of the tenure to collect and pay the land-revenue.
4. A *taalluqadar* was one who paid land-revenue for a number of villages, but those villages were held not by one person but a number of co-sharers.
5. One who purchased a few villages but his *zamindari* was not of long standing.

Thus the *taalluqa*, it appears, signified an administrative circle created by the government officials, a newly purchased *zamindari* and a tenure which entitled its holders to engage on behalf of other *zamindars*.<sup>21</sup>

The evidence contained in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* furnishes additional information as to the peculiar feature of the term *taalluqa* in which it was used in Gujrat. It appears that in Gujrat the word was used to signify the area of villages held by the Kolis and the Rajputs as their *banth* lands. Such lands were not directly assessed by government officials. The holders of these *taalluqas* were called *zamindars* and not *taalluqadars*, and paid fixed *peshkash*.<sup>22</sup> A piece of evidence specifically referring to Bengal has defined *taalluqah* as a small *zamindari* and a *talluqahdar* as a small *zamindar*,<sup>23</sup> while in another work, referring to the same province, *taalluqadar* has been equated with *mustajir* or revenue-farmer, enjoying no permanent and specific rights.<sup>24</sup>

These definitions given in the Persian sources are confirmed, modified and supplemented by similar evidence contained in the works compiled by the early British administrators.

The *taalluqa*, in the Central Provinces, signified an administrative division created by government. According to Malcolm "the lesser district (less than a *pargana*) is called Tallook".<sup>25</sup> Again a *taalluqa* signified, as mentioned above, a tenure which entitled a single individual, who happened to be a *zamindar*, with the consent of other *zamindars*, to engage for land-revenue on behalf of those *zamindars*. Such were the *taalluqadars* of the

20. Add. 6603, ff. 54b, 55a.

21. Add. 6603, ff. 54b, 55a.

22. See Chapter I.

23. *Daftar-i-Khalisa*, ff. 9b, 10a.

24. Add. 19,504 f. 100a.

25. *Memoirs of Central India*, Malcolm, p. 5f.n.



former North-Western Provinces.<sup>26</sup> The result of the investigations made into the *taalluqadari* tenure, contained in the Revenue Records of the North-Western Provinces, shows that the origin of many *talluqadars* in this province seems to be a matter of comparatively recent history and that originally they were farmers.<sup>27</sup> The *taalluqadari* rights, it appears, could not be transferred by sale or mortgage. But the available evidence suggests that they were frequently inherited. On the whole, the *taalluqadars* in the North-West Provinces claimed hereditary right in the profit of the office but did not put forward any claim to property in the soil.<sup>28</sup>

Thus we see that in the North-West Province the *taalluqadari* tenure had something in common with the institution of revenue-farming. However, there appears to have been important differences between the two.

Whereas the office of the *taalluqadar* was hereditary the ordinary revenue-farmer could hardly lay any such claims. Secondly, while the *taalluqadar* occupied the position of a farmer, in as much as he engaged for land revenue on behalf of other *zamindars*, he was himself a *zamindar*. According to one of our authorities the important difference between a *zamindar* and a *taalluqadar* lay in the fact that the latter was not only a *zamindar* but also engaged for the collection and payment of the land revenue of villages owned by the *zamindars*.<sup>29</sup> Thirdly, whereas the revenue farmer represented the authority of the government or the *jagirdar* the *taalluqadar* was a representative of the *zamindars*. For a student of agrarian history it is this feature of the tenure which is of great significance in understanding the creation of the big *taalluqas* in Awadh. There is little contemporary evidence to explain the extinction of the claims of the large number of village *zamindars* whose rights were usurped by the *taalluqadars*. But the results of the investigations made by the British administrators give an insight into the wholesale extinction of the village *zamindars* by the *taalluqadars* who took advantage of their superior position to convert the *taalluqadari* tenure into real *zamindari* rights.<sup>30</sup>

26. Special features of *talluqadari* tenure in this province may be summed up as follows :—

- (a) The *taalluqa* was an estate held by different proprietors, the one superior, other inferiors. The profits of the estate were divided between the two parties.
- (b) The superior proprietor was known as *taalluqadar*, and had become an intermediary for collection and payment of land-revenue, with the consent of the *zamindars*. The office could also be granted by the sovereign.
- (c) As an intermediary he was entitled to some profit or commission. However, the *taalluqadar* did not normally exercise any right of interference with the proprietary and hereditary rights of those whom he represented (see Wilsons Glossary, cf. (Garden of India, p. 33).

27. *Selections : Revenue Records*, p. 89.

28. *Selections : Revenue Records*, p. 89.

29. Add. 6603, ff. 54b, 55a.

30. *Selections : Revenue Records*, pp. 91, 188.



In Bengal, however, the term '*taalluqa*' signified a small *zamindar* or a *zamindari* which was recently purchased and was not of long standing. This is corroborated by documentary evidence furnished by the sale-deed of the village Calcutta and other villages which were purchased by the East India Company. In the sale-deed documents they have been described as *taalluqadar*.<sup>31</sup> The *taalluqa* in Bengal was classified into two categories namely *huzuri* and *mazkuri*. The revenue of the former was paid direct to the government, whereas the revenue of the latter was paid through a superior such as a *zamindar* or proprietor. The holders of the first were classed with *zamindars* or proprietary landholders. The *muzkuri taalluqa* was hereditary and transferable as long as the revenue was paid but lapsed to the superior if there were no heirs.<sup>32</sup>

## Section II

### Land-Revenue (*mal-wajib*) Paying Zamindars

It has been generally assumed that the presence of the *zamindars* was confined to hilly tracts and the outlying regions of the Empire mainly in the Himalayan tracts, in Rajputana, Gujarat, Orissa, and Berar and that these *zamindars* were vassal chiefs.<sup>33</sup> This view ignores the presence of *zamindars* other than the vassal chiefs, and presupposes that where the latter did not exist, the government came into direct contact with the cultivating peasants. This omission can be traced back to the misleading arrangement of provincial statistics in the printed text of the *Ain* and its faulty rendering into English. The translation and the printed text suggest that the castes mentioned in the schedule for each *mahal* refer to the population of that *mahal*. An examination of the statistical account of the *subas* contained in a manuscript,<sup>34</sup> available in the Maulana Azad Library, Muslim University, Aligarh, contains a number of columns such as measured area, *dami*, *siyurghal*, *bumi* and *zamindar*. The castes in various *mahals* have been entered under the head *zamindar*. It is evident that Abul Fazl has recorded only those castes which held the position and title of *zamindars* in their respective *mahals* and not all the castes residing in these *mahals*. This is also borne out by the fact that with a few exceptions the castes recorded in the tables are the upper classes of the Hindus and the Muslims which never formed the bulk of the cultivating peasantry. Thus it is obvious that the *zamindars* existed in almost all the *mahals* of the Empire including those

31. Add. 24, 039, f. 36ab.

32. *Wilson's Glossary*, p. 498; *Fifth Committee Report*, III, *Glossary to Vth Report*, p. 51.

33. *Provincial Administration of the Mughals*, pp. 111-113.

34. *Ain-i-Akbari*, Sulaiman, 636/14, Maulana Azad Library A.M.U. Aligarh.



which lay at its centre. We know that certain areas were held by the *zamindars* who paid *peshkash* and enjoyed internal autonomy. But for the majority of *mahals* there is no evidence to show that the *zamindars* mentioned against them were *peshkashi*. Again, the administrative history of Akbar's reign, the conversion of the bulk of the imperial territory into *khalisa*, the instructions issued to the revenue officials at the *pargana* level and the detailed directions about the assessment and collection of land-revenue indicating the village as the unit of assessment rule out the possibility that these *mahals* were under the vassal chiefs who paid *peshkash*. Besides this circumstantial evidence there is some positive evidence relating to the period from Akbar to Muhammad Shah which indicates that there was a class of *zamindars* which was distinguished from the *peshkashi zamindars* and paid *mal-wajib* or land-revenue based on the detailed assessment of the crops.

The earliest document throwing light on this point is a sale-deed, dated 994 A.H./1585 A.D.<sup>35</sup> It confirms the transfer of proprietary rights (*satarhi*) of the entire village Jarha in Pargana Sandila in Awadh to Mian Amman son of Adhan against the sum of Rs. 1,568/-. The sale-deed was executed on behalf of Narain, Asa, Nakkhu, Bhakkan and others who belonged to the Brahman caste. A number of other sale-deeds show that proprietary rights which were transferable were variously known as *biswai*, *satarhi*, *zamindari* and *milkiyat* rights and the holders of these rights were known as *zamindars*.<sup>36</sup>

It is well-known that the *zamindari* of the three villages including Calcutta was purchased for the East India Company which was designated as the *taalluqadar* of the said villages and was required to pay *malwajib* or land-revenue amounting to Rs. 1,194/.<sup>37</sup> In Ajmer too there were *zamindars* who were required to pay *mal-wajib*.<sup>38</sup> In Bihar the *zamindars* of Tikari, Bhojpur and Namdar Khan Mian were big *zamindars* but were required to pay *mal-wajib*.<sup>39</sup> A document contained in the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* indicates the presence of a *zamindar* in Sarkar Muradabad who paid revenue on the basis of detailed assessment and was entitled to certain rights known as *nankar* and *dahyak*.

A study of the Bengal Government Records reproducing the copies of the *band-o-bast* (settlement) for the provinces of Jellapore and Dacca for the year 1769-1770 reveals, in the first place, that the *zamindars* in this area

35. *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 219, 224, 370, 375, 418, 435.

36. *Taalluqadar* was used in more than one sense. Here it signifies the owner of the newly purchased *zamindari* and in a way inferior to the *zamindar* who held his lands in ancestral rights.

37. Add. 6603, ff. 36 ab; Add. 240; 39, ff. 36, ab; 39, a & c.

38. *Waqai-i-Suba Ajmer* pp. 88, 89; also see pp. 12, 13, 49, 61.

39. *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, p. 296; also see *Revenue Chiefs of Bihar*, pp. 22-31; *Muntakhab-i-Chahar Gulzar-i-Shujai*, ff. 107b, 108-ab.



of Bengal paid *mal-wajib*. Secondly, these records show the varying sizes of the *zamindaris* which comprised more than a *pargana*, a *pargana*, a single *taalluqa*, more than a *taalluqa* or only a *tappa*.<sup>40</sup> Thus apart from the *peshekashi zamindars* there were other *zamindars* who paid *mal-wajib* and their presence can be definitely traced in Ajmer, Delhi, Awadh, Bihar and Bengal. Early British records not only corroborate the inference but also reveal the existence of numerous such *zamindars*.<sup>41</sup>

Our sources for the study of the institution of *zamindari* in the first half of the eighteenth century comprise a number of documents preserved in the U.P. State Records Archives, Allahabad, the revelant evidence contained in the *Mirat-ul-Istilah* by Anand Ram Mukhlis and in the *Dastur-ul-Amal-Bekas*. The evidence furnished by these sources together with the evidence found in the chronicles and some works compiled in the last quarter of the eighteenth century and early years of nineteenth century help us to construct a fairly intelligible picture of the institution during the period under study.

### Definition of Zamindari

According to Anand Ram Mukhlis, who was attached to the court of Muhammad Shah, the word (*zamindari*) originally meant a person who possessed land, but in his own time it denoted a person who owned land in a village or town and carried on cultivation.<sup>42</sup> In a work compiled in the last quarter of the eighteenth century the answer to a query whether the king or the *zamindar* was the owner of land shows that in ancient times the owners of land in every part of the country were *rajas* and *zamindars*. Since the reign of Timur Shah (perhaps the author refers to the establishment of the Mughal Empire) the owner of land was the king and the power to appoint a *zamindar* and to deprive him of his *zamindari* vested in the king.

In answer to the query as regards the power and authority of the *zamindar*, we are told that he derived his authority from his *zamindari* right over the cultivators who tilled the land and that the *zamindari* rights consisted of *nankar* which he had been granted as a reward for his service rendered in connection with the cultivation of land by the cultivators.<sup>43</sup> Elsewhere in a work, compiled in the nineteenth century for the benefit of the British officers,

40. *Bengal Government Records*, pp. 68, 78; also see *Bengal District Records Rangpur*, Vol. VI, pp. 32, 44, 60, 61, 82, 83, 86, 104; *District Records of Dinajpur*, p. 175; *tappa* comprised a number of villages and was a smaller unit of land revenue administration than the *taalluqa*.

41. *Bengal District Records: District Records of Dinajpur*, p. 175; *District Records of Rangpur*, pp. 32-104; *Revenue Records*, pp. 19-24, 112-134; *Land Revenue Systems of British India*, pp. 154-170.

42. *Mirat-ul-Istilah*, f. 122, b.

43. Add. 19,504, f. 100a.



the *zamindar* has been defined as one who looked after the land.<sup>44</sup> With the advent of Islam, we are told in the same work, such persons were designated as *zamindars*. The land was divided into shares and each *zamindar* was granted a *sanad* as well as a *nankar*. A *zamindar* was entitled to sell his *zamindari*. In case he was found guilty of some offence the king was empowered to confiscate his *zamindari* and to transfer it to some one else. However, this power could not be exercised by the *Subadars* and the nobles. The rights and perquisites<sup>45</sup> granted to the *zamindars* comprised *nankar*,<sup>46</sup> *sairchauth*<sup>47</sup> and *malikana*.<sup>48</sup>

The *zamindars* who paid land-revenue fixed on the basis of detailed assessment could be classified into several categories. In the first place, there were *zamindars* who were co-sharers in the co-parcenary *zamindaris* referred to as *pattidari* and *bhaiyyachari* and *bissadari*.<sup>49</sup> There is evidence that this type of *zamindari* did exist in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and British records only point to the continuity of the system which operated in the first half of the eighteenth century. These *zamindaris* might comprise a single village or a number of villages but shares in these *zamindaris* were held by a number of co-sharers who most often belonged to the same ancestral line. Thus we read that the village Patwaripur Maitune, in Pargana Sandilah, was held in *zamindari* rights by Saba, Saha and Gobindi who sold all the shares of the village to Bajiware Lal Sain for Rs. 508/13/- only.<sup>50</sup> Another document dated 1141 *fasli*/1734 A.D. records the sale of shares in the villages of Baqar Nagar and Patti Sarjupur on behalf of co-parcenary *zamindaris*.<sup>51</sup> Yet another document records the sale of shares in the villages of Sikandarpur, Makkhanpur, Lodhia in Pargana Sira, Sarkar Khairabad, on behalf of a number of co-sharers.<sup>52</sup> Secondly there were *zamindaris* held by a single person or by a family, which comprised a number of villages sometimes referred to as a *taalluqa*.<sup>53</sup> Sobha

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44. Add. 6603, f. 65.

45. Add. 6603, f. 65a.

46. A commission of 10% for services rendered in connection with cultivation of land; Add. 19054, f. 10a.

47. *Zamindar's* share of 1/4th in the collections made under the head *sair* or taxes other than land revenue (add. 6603, f. 65a.)

48. The fixed commission of 10% for (*zamindars* proprietary right which was fixed either in cash or in kind. (Add 6603, f. 65, 77 ab; Revenue Records, p. 5).

49. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi Ali Khan*, f. 5b; also see *Land Revenue system of British India*, pp. 68-87.

50. *Allahabad Documents*, No. 418.

51. *Allahabad Documents*, No. 224.

52. Ibid No. 229 Such *zamindaris* could be referred to as *taalluqa*. See Add. 6603, ff.

54, 55.

53. *Taalluqa* literally signified a dependency; in terms of revenue administration a number of villages belonging to a *zamindari* or a family of *zamindars* was known as *taalluqa*; it also denoted like *tappa* a unit of land revenue administration smaller than a *pargana*.



Singh, the *zamindar* of Jhangar in Sarkar Moradabad, appears to have owned a number of villages in *zamindari* rights and he referred to his *zamindari* as a *taalluqa*. Lastly, there were fairly big *zamindaris* which comprised a large number of villages, a number of *taalluqas*, a *pargana* or more than one *pargana*. In Bengal big *zamindaris* comprising a *pargana*, more than a *pargana* or a large number of *taalluqas* appear to have been quite common.<sup>54</sup> But even in Bengal co-parcenary *zamindaris* comprising a few villages can be traced<sup>55</sup>. Similarly there is evidence that in Bihar big *zamindaris* comprising a *pargana* or more than a *pargana* did exist.<sup>56</sup> Evidence furnished by the *Durr-ul-Ulum* shows that fifty villages were held by a joint family. We find in the same source that the Mandwih *pargana* in Sarkar Sambhal was held in *zamindari* rights by Mool Chand and Sakhwand.<sup>57</sup>

Now we can examine the position concerning the rights and duties of these *zamindaris* in greater detail. This evaluation of the rights and duties of the village *zamindar* will be based on the sources belonging to the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Our justification for the utilisation of the earlier and later evidence lies in the fact that, as already mentioned, the village *zamindar* continued to occupy almost the same legal position in the land-revenue administration under the Mughals, and the present writer has not been able to find any evidence indicating a break in the continuity of the *zamindar's* legal position. It is true that the *zamindars* in different regions and at different periods passed through many vicissitudes of fortune and in particular the wide-spread practice of *ijara* in the first half of the eighteenth century brought about the ruin of many ancient families of the *zamindars*. However, with regard to their legal position as *zamindars* and their perquisites and obligations the present writer has not been able to discover any important changes.

### Position of the Zamindars

The land revenue-paynig *zamindars* formed the most numerous class among the subjects of the State who had some rights of property in land. Under the conditions prevailing at the time they were regarded as indispensable to the smooth working of the land-revenue administration in the bulk of the imperial territory. It dealt with them in their two-fold position of subjects having rights of property in land and as intermediaries who collected the land-revenue assessed by the government officers and saw to it that the

54. *Records of the Government of Bengal, 1769-1770*, pp 68-97, *Bengal District Records Dinajpur*, Vol. II (1786-88), pp. 171, 183.

55. Add. 2439, f. 39, a & c.

56. *Durr-ul-Ulum* : ff. 52 b, 53a. We read that the *zamindaris* of the villages Kandah, Maqsdumpur and Daudpur and others totalling 50 villages, in the province of Bihar, were held by Kamal and others.

57. *Durr-ul-Ulum*, f. 43a.



village was cultivated to its maximum capacity. It appears that the law fully recognized these two positions, quite independent of each other, and a village *zamindar* did not lose his perquisites arising from his proprietary *zamindari* rights if he chose not to engage for the assessed land-revenue.<sup>58</sup> It was this special position enjoyed by the *zamindar* that raised his status above that of a mere intermediary and distinguished him from a farmer and gave an element of continuity to the institution of *zamindari*. However, the *zamindar* remained at the same time an intermediary as he engaged for the collection and payment of the land-revenue assessed on the cultivated land in his *zamindari*. Such an assessment was made on the basis of the individual holdings of the peasants or on the village as a whole and, therefore, the land-revenue paying *zamindars* were also known as the *zamindaran-i-raiyati* as opposed to the *zamindaran-i-zortalab* who often defied the authority of the State and paid fixed tribute only under the threat of being subdued by the State army. Lastly, it is important to note that a *zamindar* was also a peasant, in as much as he hired labourers to till his fields and this gave him an abiding interest in and attachment to the soil and the village he lived in. The fact that he was also a peasant should be taken into consideration in order to understand the rural economy and the relations it established among the various groups having some interest in land. It would be an error leading to much confusion if the village *zamindars* were identified with absentee landlords interested primarily in extorting the maximum from their *zamindaris*.

### Rights and Perquisites

We have already seen that the most important functions of the village *zamindar* were two, namely to ensure the cultivation of all cultivable land in his *zamindari* and the collection of the assessed land-revenue. In recognition of these services rendered to the state the *zamindar* was granted certain perquisites known as *nankar* or subsistence allowance in the form of land granted to him for cultivation.<sup>59</sup> In fact, it was a commission on the total collections and could be paid either in the form of land or in cash. *Nankar* elsewhere has been defined as a grant of two *biswas* in a *bigha* for services rendered in connection with the cultivation of land and in certain provinces it consisted of a commission of 5% on the collections.<sup>60</sup> Besides the *nankar* the *zamindar* received something for his rights of property in land when it

58. A village *zamindar* was entitled to *mailikana* even if he did not engage for the payment of land revenue. *Revenue Selections*, p. 5; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 268; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi Ali Khan*, ff. 3b, 4a.

59. Add. 6603, f. 79b.

60. Add. 19,504, f. 100a.



was brought under cultivation. The proceeds of his proprietary rights<sup>61</sup> were known as *malikana*.<sup>62</sup> He was entitled to the *malikana* dues even if he did not engage for collection and payment of land-revenue.<sup>63</sup> The form of payment and the percentage of proceeds differed from province to province. It was either a definite percentage of the area under cultivation, of the collections in cash or of the produce.<sup>64</sup> Besides these perquisites the proprietary right in *zamindari* was hereditary and it was distributed among the rightful heirs of the deceased *zamindar*.<sup>65</sup> Finally, a village *zamindar* was entitled to sell his *zamindari* rights against a sum agreed upon between the vendor and the vendee.<sup>66</sup>

The *zamindar* occupied the dual position of the owner of the land and that of a semi-official, sometimes referred to as *ahilkar*,<sup>67</sup> and was paid for the services rendered by him out of the *jama* or the assessed land-revenue. The accounts, contained in the administrative and accountancy manuals, show that the total amount supposed to have been collected was noted under two heads, namely the amount in the custody of the *Futahdar* and the amount appropriated by the staff connected with the assessment and collection of land-revenue. The latter head has been specified as *akhrajat* (expenses) or *mazkurat*, which includes, among others, the amount allowed to or appropriated by the *zamindars*.<sup>68</sup> Thus we can infer that the *zamindars* were paid out of *jama* or the assessed land-revenue. The inference is borne out by a passage contained in the *Risala-i-Ziraat*.

Supposing the collection of land-revenue to be one rupee the author gives the distribution of the amount among the government, the *Patwari* and the *zamindar* as follows :<sup>69</sup>

1. <i>Patwari</i> and <i>Tarafdar</i>	0—1—0	16 11
2. <i>Zamindar</i>	0—5—6	
3. Remitted to the Treasury	0—9—6	2
	<hr/>	
	1—0—0	
	<hr/>	

61. The payment to the *zamindar* for his proprietary rights was also known as *do-biswai* and *dab yak*. It denoted a commission of 2 *biswas* per *bigha*. In case the land was tilled by the *zamindar* he was entitled to *nanakar* but not to *malikana* perquisites. See Add. 6603, f. 51a; cf *Dastur-ul-Amal Bekas*, f. 52a.

62. Add. 6603, f. 51a.

63. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi Ali Khan*, ff. 3b, 4a.

64. Add. 6603, ff. 79ab.

65. *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 229, 435.

66. *Allahabad Documents*, 317, 319 (Akbar's reign) 375, 436 (Aurangzeb's reign) 225 (Bahadur Shah's reign) Add. 24039, ff. 36ab, 39b & c; also see *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 224, 299, 370, 418.

67. *Risala-i-Ziraat*, f. 8a.

68. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, f. 46b; *Siyaq Nama*, pp. 61, 62.

69. *Risala-i-Ziraat*, f. 11b.



The share of the *zamindar* in this case, which specifically refers to Bengal, amounts to about 33% of the collections. However, the evidence pertaining to other areas, already examined, indicates that the share of the *zamindar* ranged from 10% to 20%.

### Functions and Duties

The land-revenue paying *zamindar* occupied an important position in the local revenue administration and his functions were many. In the first place, he was required to see that all cultivable land in his *zamindari* was brought under cultivation.<sup>70</sup> He was in a position to persuade or coerce the peasants to engage in cultivation. Under the conditions prevailing at the time it was not possible for the government official, who had no intimate contact with the peasants, to persuade them to till the soil as they were disinclined to trust a stranger. But a *zamindar*, who and whose ancestors had almost invariably resided in the village for generations, could not afford, under normal conditions, to ignore the interests of his fellow-villagers who were associated with him in many ways in the limited but compact life of a village. In fact, his interest in land and in the prosperity of the village was real and vital. A prosperous village meant more money and comfort for him; in addition it secured for him the goodwill and loyal services of his tenants. Hence his services for the local administration were almost indispensable. In fact, the government keenly realised the importance of his role, and he was constantly reminded of his duty to bring more land under cultivation and to secure the good-will of the ryots. His next important function was that of an intermediary to collect the assessed land-revenue and remit it to the treasury. It required a great deal of tact and resourcefulness to secure an assessment which would be just to the peasants and fair to the State and would at the same time secure something for the *zamindar* himself in the bargain.

In addition to these duties he was also associated with the work of maintaining law and order. For example, he was required to furnish information about a thief or a miscreant suspected to be taking refuge in his *zamindari*.<sup>71</sup> He could also be summoned to perform military duty and join a military expedition against a neighbouring *zamindar* who had been declared a rebel for non-payment of land-revenue or for some other act of insubordination.<sup>72</sup>

70. *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 317, 319, (Akbar's reign), 375, 435, (Aurangzeb's reign) 225 (Bahadur Shah's reign) Add. 24039, ff. 36ab, 39a and c.

71. *Waqaa-i-Suba Ajmer*, p. 66.

72. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 56 ab.



### Conditions in the 18th century

The condition of a land-revenue paying *zamindar* in the first half of the eighteenth century was far from secure or satisfactory. It might have been different for those *zamindars* who possessed a large number of villages, commanded sufficient manpower and were in a position of strength to cope successfully with the acts of oppression committed by the *Amil*, the *jagirdar* or the *ijarahdar*. The central government had been gradually weakening and was too much occupied with other important affairs at the Court, in Rajputana, or in Panjab, to keep the various parties who had some interest in land within the limits laid down by the imperial regulations. It often failed to suppress the unruly and defiant *zamindars* in the vicinity of the capital. It was, therefore, not possible for the central government to give any serious attention to innumerable violations of the imperial regulations at the *pargana* level. It was generally left to the local authorities, the *Amil*, the *Faujdar* or the *jagirdar* to act at their own discretion and to meet the situation with the resources which they could immediately command. Normally no help from the Court could be expected in dealing with a local situation ; at the same time a local officer in actual practice was hardly accountable for his acts of oppression. Under such circumstances, a powerful *zamindar* was less exposed to acts of oppression by the *Amil* or the *Faujdar*. If driven to extremity he could successfully defy the local authority. In fact, prudence bade the local officers respect rather than coerce a powerful *zamindar*. But the case was different for his less fortunate brothers who happened to be small *zamindars*, and who constituted the majority within the class. An unjust *Amil* or a hard-pressed *jagirdar* could hardly resist the temptation to overassess the land owned by a *zamindar*. The village *zamindar* naturally resisted any unjust increase in land-revenue. His stand in refusing to engage for land-revenue in excess of the actual rent-roll created the necessary conditions for the appearance of the rapacious *ijarahdar* on the village scene. The *zamindar* was thus forced into the dilemma of either engaging for an increased *jama* or surrendering the village to the *ijarahdar* for extortion. In such circumstances ruin stared him in the face. If he engaged for increased land-revenue he was bound to transfer the burden of the revenue demand on to the peasants who faced the alternatives of being either ruined or leaving the village. In a short time, the *zamindar's* village would be deserted. On the other hand vacating the village for the *ijarahdar* meant for the *zamindar* immediate loss of all his means of subsistence except the meagre proceeds from his *malikana* right. In this case too the peasants would ultimately be ruined and the village deserted. This was more or less the situation in which the majority of the small land-revenue paying *zamindars* found themselves in the first-half of the eighteenth century.

This evaluation of the condition of the village *zamindars* based on

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the general evidence pertaining to political and administrative conditions of the period, is confirmed by evidence contained in the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*. In it we find two letters exchanged between a government officer and Sobha Singh, the Zamindar of Jhangar, in *Sarkar Sambhal*. The revenue officer of his *pargana* charges<sup>73</sup> Soba Singh with failure to pay land-revenue, attributes it to his unruly conduct and hostile attitude towards the government and threatens him with military action. In his petition the *zamindar* refutes the charges levelled against him, describes the agrarian conditions that prevailed in his *taalluqa* in the preceding years, criticises the role of the *ijarahdars* and makes a proposal for a fair assessment of land-revenue. Since the points made in the *arzdasht* corroborate our analysis, it deserves a detailed examination.

Sobha Singh asserts in the *arzdasht*<sup>74</sup> that his forefathers always rendered necessary service to the former *hakims*<sup>75</sup> and regularly paid land-revenue. They presented themselves whenever they were summoned by the officers and helped them to suppress the unruly and the mischievous. At the same time they protected the ryots from oppression and created among them a sense of security. The *Amils* duly recognised the services rendered to them and appreciated the regular payment of land-revenue. In those days the district was well governed and enjoyed peace and prosperity. During the preceding four or five years moneyed farmers, inexperienced and indifferent to the prosperity of the country and the ryots, had arrived in the district from the head-quarters. They were primarily interested in exacting the maximum land-revenue and aimed at ruining the country and the ryots. For these reasons, Sobha Singh made up his mind to compete with the farmers and engaged for the increased revenue demand. He tried to face the situation as far as his resources permitted, but the revenue demand continued to increase and driven to extreme helplessness he succumbed and withdrew from the contest. The *arzdasht* suggests that a little later the farmers left the district which was deserted and ruined. Consequently the *Amil* personally visited the villages of the district for a satisfactory reorganisation of the revenue arrangements.

Now the *Amil*, continues the *arzdasht*, had taken the trouble to visit the country personally and had earned a reputation for being just and well-disposed towards the ryots. Sobha Singh was encouraged to come out, make contacts with the peasants in his *taalluqa* and induce them to engage in cultivation. In spite of prevailing scarcity in the district he had succeeded in collecting the land-revenue. However, the petition points out, the *Amil*

73. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 50-a-51b.

74. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 51b-52b.

75. *bakim*: a government official; more especially it referred to the Faujdar, who combined the executive and judicial powers in his office.



had not taken into consideration the fact that the *zamindar* was willing to pay the land-revenue. On the other hand, yielding to manipulation by interested persons, he had made up his mind to declare war upon the *zamindar*. Concluding his *arzdast* the *zanindar* requested the *Amil* to assess the *jama* of his *taalluqa* on the basis of *muwazna-i-dah sala*<sup>76</sup> after making the necessary deductions for *nankar* and *dah yak*.<sup>77</sup> If his request met with favour he would be prepared to pay a visit to the *Amil*. However, if the *Amil*, under the influence of selfish mischief mongers, remained obdurate, the *zamindar* would be compelled to face the situation as it developed. As the *Amils* knew well, a *zamindar* could not leave his ancestral home without giving a fight as such a course of action would compromise his honour. He hoped that justice would be done to him as he had explained the position faithfully.

An examination of the foregoing summary of the *arzdast* reveals that the *zamindar* had withheld the payment of land-revenue which established a clear case of insubordination or rebellion against him. The *Amil* wanted to treat the *zamindar* as a rebel if the latter failed to make amends immediately for his conduct by paying off the land-revenue and visiting the *Amil*. The *zamindar* admitted that the land-revenue had not been paid but pointed out that the revenue demand made upon him was excessive and had been enormously increased during the preceding few years when his *taalluqa* had come under the hold of *ijarahdars*. He was unable to outbid the latter and had withheld himself from engagement. He insisted that if a settlement was to be made with him the assessment of land-revenue should be based upon *muwazana-i-dah sala* and that his *zamindari* rights should be restored. Incidentally we also learn that the farming out of villages had ruined cultivation and the peasantry and that the farmer, for one reason or other, had disappeared from the scene. The *Amil* had decided to deal with the *zamindar* who had persuaded the cultivators to bring the land under cultivation. The brief revenue history of the *taalluqa*, as given in the *arzdast*, is extremely revealing and can help us to draw certain important conclusions about the conditions that existed in the first half of the eighteenth century. In the first place, it confirms the evidence from other sources that the evil practice of *ijara* had become quite wide-spread during the period under study and that it invariably led to the ruin of the *zamindar* and the peasantry and to the

76. *Muwazana-i-dah-salah*, also known as *taqsim*, was maintained by the Qanungo. It was a consolidated statement of the agrarian conditions obtaining in a *pargana* during the preceding ten years, showing the number of villages, the area of arable land, land under cultivation, waste, forest, gardens, pools, nullah, and the area of *madad maash* land; various crops sown in *rabi* and *kharif* with current prices of every article; *jama* figures, rates of assessments, and particulars of receipts and arrears. (Vide *Dastur-ul-Amal-Alamgiri*, f. 41a; *Land Revenue History of Bengal*, p. 165; *Diwan Pasand*, f. 77).

77. *dah yak* seems to be another name for *malikana* or *do biswai* or 1/10th. See Add. 6603, f. 51 a.



desolation of the land. Secondly, the *zamindar* constantly stood in terror of the *ijarahdar* who, on the one hand, directly threatened his right to collect revenue and on the other his presence could be utilised to coerce the *zamindar* to engage for increased *jama* which brought ruin to him and to the villages. In order to rehabilitate the villages either the old *zamindar* had to be re-instated with the assurance of a fair assesment or a new *zamindar* had to be appointed. This practice became recurring feature of agrarian life in the first half of the eighteenth century. The root of the evil could be traced back to the crisis in the *jagirdari* system which had been deepening since the last years of Aurangzeb's reign. The crisis in the *jagirdari* system was accompanied with the wide-spread practice of *ijara* which was instrumental in the ruination of the *zamindars* and the peasantry, the two classes which had an abiding interest in land. It must surely also have lowered the productivity of the country.

The above discussion of the condition of the land-revenue paying *zamindars* and the conclusions drawn on its basis are directly confirmed by an earlier writer who compiled his work on the existing administrative practices in the early eighteenth century. In his account of the *zamindari* system<sup>78</sup> the author says that in former days the government officers were just and kept their pledges. Consequently the *zamindars* took interest in bringing land under cultivation and paid land-revenue without making any complaints. But in his own days the *mansabdars* holding small ranks were appointed to high and responsible posts and they were provided with a small number of soldiers to carry on the work of revenue administration. Such a small contingent was inadequate for suppressing and controlling powerful and unruly *zamindars*. The *mansabdars* in order to meet their expenditure wanted to increase the revenue demand every year and, therefore, they oppressed the small *zamindars*. The *zamindars*, in their turn, oppressed the ryots. Driven to extremity they left the *raiya* areas and settled down in the territories which were under the *zamindars* who paid a fixed tribute when compelled to do so by force. The territories under the vassal chiefs and *peshkashi zamindars* consequently became well-populated and well-cultivated and the unruly *zamindars*, day by day, gained in power and strength. The *raiya* *zamindars* were weakened and reduced to poverty. They could not pay land-revenue and took recourse to false pretexts. The profession of the *zamindari*, therefore, fell into disrepute.

### Appointments of Zamindar

We have noted that the *zamindars* who paid land revenue assessed on the basis of individual holdings of the peasants were hereditary *zamindars*. The hereditary *zamindars*' rights could also be obtained by purchase. Be-

78. *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, ff. 64-b-66b.



sides them, there was another class of land-revenue paying *zamindars* who were appointed by the State. Such an appointment was generally necessitated by the unruly and turbulent attitude of a hereditary *zamindar* who refused to pay the land-revenue.<sup>79</sup> A suitable person, a loyal *zamindar* punctual in the payment of land-revenue<sup>80</sup> or an able officer of the State,<sup>81</sup> was appointed as the *zamindar* of the territory vacated by the rebel. Generally, such an appointment carried with it a fixed rank and necessitated the offer of a suitable *peshkash* by the appointee.<sup>82</sup> The *zamindar* appointed by the State and holding a rank seems to have been subject to *dagh* and *tashiha* regulations but in certain cases an exemption from these regulations was made.<sup>83</sup> The *zamindari* thus acquired, however, differed from the ordinary *zamindari* in one important respect. It could not be hereditary. After the death of the *zamindar* the application of a new candidate was entertained and if a suitable *peshkash* was forthcoming the application was recommended and approved.<sup>84</sup>

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79. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 45a, 88b, 89a; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 230.

80. *Ibid*, ff. 88—89.

81. *Akbbarat*, 38/137.

82. *Akbbarat*, 44/142.

83. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, pp. 284, 285.

84. *Akbbarat*, 44/142, *Akbbarat*, 38/137.



# LAND-REVENUE DEMAND AND METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

## Section — I

The agricultural community and some of those who were associated with the work of assessment and collection enjoyed certain rights and had certain interests in land. These rights entitled them to variable shares in the produce of the soil. The peasants, the *zamindars*, the *Qanungos*, the *Chaudharis* and the *Patwaris*, all claimed and received a share in the produce of the land cultivated in the village. These we can describe as local rights and interests. But the claim of the sovereign in the produce of the land was more important and a considerable part of it was appropriated by him through his agents and officers. According to Abul Fazl he appropriated a part of the produce as "remuneration of sovereignty" for maintaining law and order and maintaining a settled society in which people could work and earn their livelihood.<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact the sovereign's right was not confined to the produce of the land; he also exercised the prerogative to impose taxes on all sorts of property and sources of income or produce.<sup>2</sup> Various taxes levied on the cultivated and pasture lands, on the produce of rivers and ponds, on commodities manufactured by artisans, on the sale and purchase of commodities and cesses to meet administrative charges were classified under three broad heads, namely, *mal*, *jihat* and *sair jihat* or *sair-ul-jihat*. The available assessment accounts, contained in the administrative and accountancy manuals, show that the assessment under these heads was made separately, the total assessment being the *jama* or land revenue demand of the village.

### Jama or land-revenue :

A study of the relevant evidence from the sixteenth century to the early nineteenth century clearly brings out the nature of these taxes and helps to determine the magnitude of land-revenue demand. The term *mal* signified the original assessment of the land-revenue made on the cultivated land in accordance with the crop-rates or cash rates. The *jihat* were taxes collected to meet the expenses incurred on the assessment of *mal*, and *sair-ul-jihat* or *sair-jihat* were the other taxes which were collected over and above *mal*.

1. *Ain-i-Akbari*, II, p. 205.

2. *Ibid*, p. 205.



*o-jihat*. It appears that the term *sair-jihat* was used in a wide as well as in a restricted sense. In the wider sense it was used as a synonym for *sair-ul-wajuh* and signified a variety of taxes excluding *mal-o-jihat*. In a more limited sense, as used in the assessment accounts of the *jama* of a village, it included only those taxes which were charged to meet the expenses incurred during the collection of *mal-o-jihat* and to defray the expenses of the agricultural community.<sup>3</sup> Among these, it appears, were such taxes, as *talabana*,<sup>4</sup> *shahnagi*,<sup>5</sup> *tappadari*<sup>6</sup> and *sadir-o-warid*.<sup>7</sup>

*Discussion  
largely*

### **Magnitude of the Land-Revenue Demand :**

The land-revenue demand constituted the total collections under three distinct heads of taxation referred to as *mal*, *jihat* and *sair-jihat*. It remains to ascertain what part of the produce was appropriated as the land-revenue demand and how much of it was realised under each of the three separate heads of taxation. Under Akbar the original assessment on the produce or *mal* amounted to one-third of the produce.<sup>8</sup> Over and above the *mal* a certain part of the produce was collected under the head *wajhut* (or *jihat*) and *sair-jihat*, as can be inferred from the evidence contained in the *Ain-i-Akbari*.<sup>9</sup> However, the evidence which indicates the original share of the State as one-third of the produce refers to areas to which crop-rates, converted into cash rates, applied. In other words, it refers to areas where *zabt* obtained. Thus we can infer that in areas where cash rates were in use, the land-revenue demand exceeded one-third of the produce.<sup>10</sup> The available evidence does

3. For a fuller discussion see Appendix C. The inferences about the nature of *mal-jibat* and *sair-jihat* are based on a study of the evidence contained in the following sources : *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. II, p. 205 ; *Khulast-us-Siyaq*, f. 13b ; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, ff. 34b, 37a. *Siyaq Nama*, pp. 33, 34, 62-64, 78, 79, *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mjumalai*, ff. 28b-29ab, 30a, 64ab, 47a ; *Fifth Committee Report*, Vol. II p. 742 ; Revenue Records, p. 260 ; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 29b, 30a ; *Muntakhab-i-Chahar Gulzar-i-Shujai*, f. 94b.

4. *talabana* : the subsistence money paid to the persons employed in serving writs for the payment of land-revenue.

5. *shahnagi* : a tax collected to pay the wages of *Shahna*, employed to watch the crops.

6. *tappadari* : perquisite of the revenue officer-in-charge of a *tappab*.

7. *sadir-o-warid* : A perquisite collected to entertain those who visited the village as travellers, pilgrims and strangers.

8. *Ain-i-Akbari*, p. 205.

9. *Ain-i-Akbari*, II, p. 205 ; Akbar's *farman* dated 983 A.A. The transcript of the *farman* is available in the Research Library, Department of History, Muslim University, Aligarh.

10. According to Moreland the standard revenue demand under Akbar was one-third of the produce. Refer to the *Agrarian System of Moslem India*, p. 135. Dr. Saran infers that "the incidence of revenue which was one-third under Sher Shah was continued unchanged. The Provincial Government of the Mughals, p. 297.



not show what part of the produce was appropriated in addition to *mal* under the heads *jihat* and *sait-jihat*. About the areas where the *nasaq*,<sup>11</sup> *kankut*<sup>12</sup> or *bhaoli*<sup>13</sup> (crop-sharing) was generally prevalent, we have no definite evidence that the land-revenue demand was separately assessed under the three heads. We, however, know that the land-revenue demand in Kashmir, where crop sharing obtained, was fixed at one-half of the produce<sup>14</sup> and in Ajmer at one-seventh or one-eighth of the produce.<sup>15</sup>

There is little evidence on record on the subject relating to the reigns of the two immediate successors of Akbar. However, the reign of Aurangzeb furnishes us with some valuable evidence which helps us to examine the question in detail. This evidence, for the sake of convenience, can be classified into three categories :

- (i) evidence showing the land-revenue demand where *zabt* obtained.
- (ii) evidence showing the land-revenue demand under *kankut* and *bhaoli*.
- (iii) evidence in the form of general instructions about the land-revenue.

Some of the accountancy manuals contain assessment accounts of the areas where *zabt* obtained. (The most valuable information is, however, available in the *Siyag Nama* in the assessment account of the Ganeshpur village.) Here we will examine it in order to determine the magnitude of the land-revenue demand and to ascertain what part of the produce was appropriated under the three heads of the *mal*, *jihat* and *sair-jihat*. (The assessment account gives the amount assessed under *mal*, together with the area of land cultivated under various crops and separate cash-rates for various crops<sup>16</sup>.) (However, as the produce per *bigha* is not given, the account does not help us to calculate the share of the produce appropriated as *mal*. We can, however, assume that it continued to be collected at the rate of one-third of the produce, as under Akbar. This assumption is based on the fact that

11. A method of assessment based on previous records.

12. A method of assessment which involved measurement of land and an estimate of produce calculated on the basis of estimated produce per *bigha*.

13. Also known as *gnalla-bakhsbi* and *batai*-a method of assessment based on actual division of crops or produce.

14. *Ain-i-Akbari*, II, p. 175, 176.

15. *Ain-i-Akbari*, II, p. 128.

16. *Siyag Nama*, p. 34. The details of *mal* assessment as given in the accountancy manual :

Mal assessment converted into rupees for kharif.	Mal assessment converted into rupees for rabi
16 bighas, 15 biswas against a sum of Rs. 45/5 as.	18 bighas against a sum of Rs. 42 13½ as.
Total : 88/2½ as	



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there is no definite evidence on record to indicate that under his successors any change in the share fixed as *mal* was introduced.

An examination of the account shows that *jihat* taxes were calculated at the rate of 5% on the amount shown as *mal*, and *sair-jihat* taxes at the rate of 15% on the aggregate amount shown as *mal-o-jihat*.<sup>17</sup> This means that the collections made over and above the *mal* amounted to more than 20% and a little less than 21%. We have assumed that the first charge on the produce known as *mal* amounted to one-third of the produce. An increase of 20% on *mal* would mean that the land-revenue demand or the total share of the State in the produce amounted to 2/5th or 40% of the produce.

For *bhaoli* and *kankut* our accounts do not show the land-revenue demand separately under the heads of *mal*, *jihat* and *sair-jihat*. They only mention the amount of total produce, the share of the ryots and the share

Kharif Assessment crops	Assessed area		Rate per bigha	Amount assessed
	Bigha	Biswa		
<i>Shamakb</i> (a kind of rice)	7	15	1-4	9-11
<i>Sali</i> (a kind of rice)	2	0	2-8	5-0
Sugarcane	5	0	5-10	28-2
<i>Mandwa</i>	2	0	1-4	2-8
			Total	45-5
<i>Rabi Assessed</i>				
Gram	2	0	1-9	3-2
Arhar	2	0	1-14	3-12
Wheat	7	15	50-0	24-4 $\frac{1}{4}$
Wheat-barley	6	15	1-14	11-12
			Total	42-14 $\frac{1}{2}$
			Grand Total for <i>kharif</i> and <i>rabi</i>	88-3 $\frac{1}{4}$

N.B.—There is a difference of an anna in the figures obtained by adding the figures for separate crops and the aggregate amount given as *mal*. This can be attributed to some mistake in the detailed account.

17. The rates specified in the assessment account for *jihat* and *sair jihat* are confirmed by the actual figures given as *mal jihat* and *sair jihat*.

*Mal*

Rs. 88/2 $\frac{1}{4}$  annas

*Jihat*

Rs. 4/7 $\frac{1}{4}$  annas

*Sair jihat*

Rs. 103/15 annas

Rs. 196/9 annas



of the government.<sup>18</sup> The total produce was equally divided between the government and the ryots.) The inference is that in crop-sharing and in *kankut* the land-revenue demand was fixed at one-half of the produce, which is also supported by other sources which state that the assessment should be made in such a way that one-half of the produce "be appropriated for the government and the other half should be completely left with the peasants."<sup>19</sup>

This evidence leads to the inference that in crop-sharing and *kankut* the share of the state was uniformly fixed at one-half of the produce. Such an inference is, however, not supported by the evidence pertaining to crop-sharing,<sup>20</sup> according to which the rates for crop-sharing varied according to the productivity of land, the kind of crop sown and the conditions of the peasants. The *farman* issued to Rasikdas contains a clause which lays down that in villages where the peasants were poor and distressed the land should be assessed on a crop-sharing basis and that the share of the state should be fixed at one-half, one-third and even less than one-third of the produce<sup>21</sup>. An instruction contained in an administrative manual, compiled in the reign of Muhammad Shah, says that in crop-sharing the minimum land-revenue demand should be fixed at one-fourth or even less, whereas the maximum could go up to one-half.<sup>22</sup> The copy of a *patta*,<sup>23</sup> preserved in the *Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani*, shows that the share of the peasant and the State in crop-sharing was fixed at three-fifths and two-fifths respectively.<sup>24</sup> Thus an examination of the available evidence on point under investigation reveals that in crop-sharing the land-revenue demand varied between one-fourth and one-half of the produce and no uniform rate specifying the share of the State was fixed. These variations in the share of the State resulted from a variety of causes, such as productivity of land, amount of labour and capital invested in a raising particular crop, irrigation facilities and the general condition

18. *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, ff. 21b, 22a ; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 32b. The account of *bhaoli* assessment as given in the two sources : *Bhaoli assessment of a village in pargana Rampur*.

	Total produce	Share of ryots	Share of State
Wheat	450 maunds	225 maunds	225 maunds
Kankut assessment as given in the <i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i> (f. 22a).			
Wheat	37 maunds	18 maunds	18 maunds
		20 seers	20 seers

19. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, ff. 129b, 131a ; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 63 ab, 64a 71 a.

20. For *kankut* we have no evidence to show that rates varied, nor any confirmatory evidence in support of the reference that in *kankut* the rate of one-half was uniform.

21. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, ff. 129b-131a.

22. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 63 ab.

23. A deed of lease, specifying the conditions on which the lands were held and the value or proportion of the produce to be paid to the authority or person from whom the lands were held.

24. *Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani*, ff. 151 ab, 152a.



of the peasants. Some of the principles which determined the magnitude of land-revenue demand in crop-sharing are clearly brought out in a passage<sup>25</sup> contained in the *Maasirul-Umara*. We learn from it that three different rates of land revenue demand were prescribed for *batai* or crop sharing by Murshid Quli Khan. One-half of the produce was taken as land-revenue for lands in which rainfall assisted the ripening of the crops. For crops which were irrigated from the wells one-third of the produce was fixed as the share of the State and two-third as the share of the peasants. However, the lands irrigated by canals were assessed at a different rate. For crops such as sugarcane and grapes the rates varied from one-ninth to one-fourth. Whereas the most productive lands which required little labour and capital were assessed at the rate of one-half of the produce, those which needed some capital and considerable labour were assessed at lower rates. The condition of the peasants also served as a determining factor in fixing the land-revenue demand.

It appears that these rules were not exclusively meant for crop-sharing but were equally applicable to other forms of assessment. Such an inference is supported by the evidence which is in the nature of general instructions and specifies the share of the produce to be appropriated as land-revenue. The most authentic and definite evidence on the point, however, is available in a *farman* contained in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*. The regulations of the *farman*, as pointed out earlier, were meant to be enforced in all parts of the Empire and were so framed as to meet the different situations which arose from time to time in assessing and collecting the land-revenue. As such the relevant regulations dealing with the magnitude of land-revenue demand deserve a careful examination. The important points dealing with the share of the State may be briefly summarised. The regulations laid down that the land-revenue demand should be fixed at a maximum of one-half of the produce and that the magnitude of land-revenue demand should, under no circumstances, exceed one-half of the produce. In places where the land revenue demand had been fixed at more than one-half of the produce, it should be reduced. As a matter of principle the land-revenue had to be fixed in accordance with the paying capacity of the peasants.<sup>26</sup> It was also laid down that local conditions should be taken into consideration and that the land-revenue demand current in a particular area was to be retained as far as possible. The fact that the conditions prevailing in the particular area were duly considered is also indicated by the adoption of *gallah bakhshi* or crop-sharing in areas where the peasants were distressed

25. *Maasirul-Umara*, III part I, pp. 497, 498. The justification for utilising the evidence of an earlier period lies in the fact that it clearly enunciates the principles on which different rates were fixed for various types of land. Similar precise evidence is not available for the entire Mughal period.

26. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 270-271.



and indigent. In such areas the rates were reduced further and the revenue demand ranged between one-third and one-half.<sup>27</sup>

To conclude, in the first place, the land-revenue demand varied according to the social and agrarian conditions in different areas and ranged between one-fourth and one-half; secondly one-half constituted the maximum and not the minimum of the demand; thirdly, as a general principle the agrarian conditions prevailing in a particular area were to be taken into consideration to fix the revenue demand in accordance with the paying capacity of the peasants. Any increase in the revenue-demand that would uproot the peasantry and ruin the cultivation was explicitly disapproved.<sup>28</sup>

Some doubts may arise with regard to these inferences in view of the evidence contained in the *Nigar-Nama-i-Munshi* and the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*. In these sources we are repeatedly told that assessment should be made in such a way that one-half of the produce should be appropriated as the share of the State and the other half should be completely left with the peasants.<sup>29</sup> The evidence referred to above seems to suggest that it was the general practice to appropriate one-half of the produce as land-revenue demand. We have shown in the above lines, in some detail, that no uniform rate of land-revenue demand was fixed under the Mughals. What then does the evidence contained in the two sources, mentioned above, amount to? The evidence contained in the *Nigar-Nama-i-Munshi* is generally in the form of orders issued by the officers of the princes for the assessment of the *jagirs* assigned to the princes. As such the application of these orders was limited to particular areas which were held by the princes as *jagirs*. The evidence does not give any indication as to which part of the Empire these areas belong. We can, however, assume that these were well-cultivated areas and that the land was highly productive. Consequently the land-revenue demand amounting to one-half of the produce was justified. The second point for consideration is whether the land-revenue at the rate of one-half of the produce of land constituted the maximum or the minimum. A passage in the same source clarifies the point. It lays down that the land-revenue demand at the rate of one-half of the produce should be treated as the maximum, and that, under no circumstances, the limit of one-half should be exceeded.<sup>30</sup>

As far as the evidence contained in the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* is concerned, it relates to *jagir* lands assigned in the Muradabad *sarkar*. The

27. *Nigar-i-Nama-i-Munshi*, ff. 129b-131a.

28. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* I, p. 270.

29. *Nigar-Nama-i-Munshi*, pp. 62, 98, 144, 145.

*Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 63ab, 64a, 71a; elsewhere in the same source the share of the State has been laid down as one-third of the produce.

*Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 32b, 33a.

30. *Nigar-Nama-i-Munshi*, p. 154.



area was well-known for its productivity and was regarded as one of the most prosperous areas in the Empire. As such the maximum land-revenue for this area was fixed at one-half of the produce.

Thus the instructions contained in these sources were meant for local application and did not lay down a uniform rate of land-revenue for all parts of the Empire; secondly, that one-half of the produce constituted the maximum land-revenue demand.

This completes our survey of the relevant evidence available in the contemporary sources. Our investigations have shown that in *zabt* assessment the total land-revenue demand amounted to two-fifth or 40% of the produce. In crop-sharing and *kankut* one-half of the produce was claimed as the maximum rate for land-revenue. The rates for the minimum are variously given as one-ninth, one-fourth and one-third<sup>31</sup>. These variations in the magnitude of land-revenue demand resulted from a variety of causes such as the quality of land, the nature of the crops sown, need for irrigation, the amount of labour and capital put in producing a crop and the general conditions of the peasants. But the most important factor which determined the actual burden of land-revenue demand was the particular method of assessment which was generally practised during the period under study. By and large, an entire village or a group of villages was assessed on the basis of previous records and the persons who engaged for land-revenue were the *zamindars* and the *taalluqadars*. The available evidence suggests that in reaching a settlement the assessing officers and the *zamindars* engaged in a bid to outwit each other, and at times the relative capacity of the contending parties to bargain decided the issue. Therefore, in order to have a fair idea of the actual burden of land-revenue demand, the various methods of assessment, referred to in our sources, should be carefully examined.

## Section — II

### Methods of Assessment

The chronicles dealing with the history of the first half of the eighteenth century contain little information about the methods of assess-

31. The inference that one-half constituted the maximum of land revenue demand and rates were not uniform is supported by the investigations made by the early British administrators. A careful study of the Revenue Records of the North (Western province) shows that the rates for land revenue demand for lands which paid cash rates and those assessed in kind, differed from pargana to pargana, and even from village to village within a pargana according to the fertility or infertility of the soil. The various rates for land revenue as given in the records are :

$\frac{1}{8}$ th,  $\frac{1}{7}$ th,  $\frac{1}{6}$ th,  $\frac{1}{5}$ th,  $\frac{1}{4}$ th,  $\frac{1}{3}$ rd,  $\frac{3}{5}$ th,  $\frac{1}{2}$ . (See *Revenue Records*, pp. 260, 262, 289).



ment that obtained during the period under study. The only contemporary work that deals with the subject is a manual entitled *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* compiled by Jawhar Mal Bekas in Muradabad-Smabhal in the year 1444 A.H./1731-32. Some valuable information is also available in reports and papers compiled for the benefit of British administrators in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. We have seen that since the days of Akbar the well-known and widely accepted methods of assessment were *nasaq*, *zabt*, *kankut* and *bhaoli*. Many of these methods of assessment continued to operate in different regions of northern India but the extent of the area in which they were used underwent some change. This change was in a large measure due to changed political and administrative conditions during the period and to the emergence of certain tendencies in revenue administration under Aurangzeb. The decay of the *jagirdari* system, accompanied by the wide-spread practice of *ijara* created a situation which was too complicated for the successful operation of the older methods of assessment.

#### Hast-o-bud

The method of assessment known as *hast-o-bud* was a well-known method of assessment under the Great Mughals. It involved the inspection of standing crops and an estimate of the expected produce on the basis of inspection.<sup>32</sup> The definition of *hast-o-bud* as given in the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* corroborates the description given in the *Farhangi-i-Kardani*. According to the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* under this system the assessing officer inspected the standing crops and assessed *jama* with the concurrence of the *Chaudharis* and the *Qanungos*.<sup>33</sup> The term has also been defined in a later work by Muhammad Yasin. Literally, says the author, the term signified standing crops, and as a method of assessment it implied assessment made on the basis of standing crops rather than that of the total area cultivated. It was a method of assessment different from the practice of calculating *jama* on the basis of the number of ploughs or the area of land ploughed.<sup>34</sup> It appears that the more oppressive assessing officers did not take into account the damage done to the field before the crop had ripened, or the area which was tilled but not sown, or cultivable land left fallow, and assessed the entire arable land entered against the name of the *zamindar* or the peasant. In such cases, the *zamindar* was entitled to demand an assessment on the basis of the actual standing crops.<sup>35</sup> Thus, the evidence in the three sources agrees that under *hast-o-bud* assessment was based on the inspection

32. *Farhangi-i-Kardani*, f. 33a.

33. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 62-63.

34. Add. 6603 f. 84 a.

35. *Ibid*, f. 84 a.



of standing crops rather than on the land tilled or the area of land entered against the name of a peasant or *zamindar*. We are further told in the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* that an increase or decrease in *jama* was made after the inspection or verification of the area under standing crop was completed. That such a method of assessment was just and equitable to the owner of the holdings is borne out by the fact that the demand for such an assessment was made by the *zamindar* himself. It also made the work of the assessing officer simple and less burdensome and saved the parties concerned from expenses entailed by measurement operations. But the most important merit of the method was that it saved the ryots and the *zamindars* from the oppression of greedy and selfish assessing officers. Indirectly it also served the interests of the State in as much as a contented and prosperous peasantry was interested in extending the area under cultivation and thus increasing the revenues of the Empire. In fact, the author of the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* makes these points emphatically when he closes his chapter on the methods of assessment and collection and offers a few words of advice to a successful *Amil*. He reminds the *Amil* that it would be in his own interest that the peasantry should be made prosperous and contented and that this end could be best attained by adopting *hast-o-bud* because it was the best method of assessment.<sup>36</sup>

Thus the *Amil* is advised to assess the entire *pargana* by using the method of *hast-o-bud* and to prepare the *fard-i-chausan*.<sup>37</sup> How far the assessor used his position to the detriment of the government or his own interest is difficult to determine.

### Kankut

*Kankut* appears as the second important method of assessment and was offered as the first option to the ryots in case they did not agree for some reason to the *hast-o-bud* arrangement. It involved, as in the reign of Akbar or Aurgangzeb, the measurement of land under crops and an estimate of the total produce accordingly. The *khassra* of *zabt-i-kankut* contained the following entries :

1. Name of the *asami* or peasant
2. Length of the field

36. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, 76 ab.

37. The document showed the following details :

1. cultivation area 2. *dami sal-i-keamil* or *jama* figures, in *dams* for the year in which the entire cultivable land was assessed. 3. *dami-i-sal-i-akmal* or *jama* figures for the year when they were maximum. 4. *sharb-i-dol-i-sal-i-bal* stated the total amount of the assessed *jama* for the current year including the expected income from sources other than land revenue and affirmed that the assessment had been made with the consent of the ryots and in consultation with the *Chaudharis* and the *Qanungos*. See *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 64b, 65a.



3. Breadth of the field
4. Total area under cultivation
5. Area of crops damaged
6. Balance of the area under standing crops
7. Area under various crops.<sup>38</sup>

It appears that generally the produce of individual holdings of a cultivator was estimated on the basis of measured area under standing crops and the average produce per *bigha* or *biswa* in the locality. In case the cultivator complained of unfair increase in the *jama*,<sup>39</sup> thus assessed, it was to be checked by determining the yield from the sample weighing of the produce. The *Amin* was required to select one *biswa* of the land under the standing crop and another *biswa* was to be selected by the ryots. The crop from the *two biswas* thus selected was to be cut and threshed out. The corn then was to be weighed, and the total produce of the measured land under crop calculated. Any increase or decrease in the assessment was to be made on the basis of the calculation of the total produce so made.<sup>40</sup> The *jamabandi* was to be prepared on the basis of the entries made in the *khewat*.<sup>41</sup> The assessed *jama* in grain was to be commuted into cash according to current prices, and the share of each *asami's* (cultivator) assessment was to be shown against him.<sup>42</sup> Thus the measurement of the land under crops was common to *zabt* as well as *kankut*; and in the preparation of the *jamabandi* cash rates were applied and the revenue demand was shown in cash under both the systems. The important difference between the two methods of assessment lay in the fact that in *kankut* the produce per *bigha* was estimated by the mutual agreement of the parties concerned, or by the sample weighing of the yield of a few *biswas*. In other words in the *kankut* arrangement the assessment was made more or less on the actual produce, and the damage to crops was equally shared by the State and the peasantry. Under *zabt*, however, the assessment was made on the conjectured or expected produce calculated on the basis of the schedule showing the average productivity per *bigha*; and although deductions were made for any serious damage done to crops by natural calamities etc., it made no provision for deductions in case the yields from the crops fell far below the average for such reasons as poor irrigation, bad seeds or unsatisfactory and poor mellowing of the soil. Thus, the *kankut* system apparently favoured the peasants. We can imagine a good deal of haggling going on between the assessing staff and the *zamindars* or their representatives before they made a choice between *zabt* and *kankut*.

38. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 70b.

39. *Jama* : here it signifies the assessed land revenue.

40. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 70b, also see *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi Ali Khan*, f. 2a.

41. *Khewat* : the register of proprietors, under-proprietors and perpetual lessees. See Wilson's Glossary, pp. 446-447.

42. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 71a. cf. *Ain I*, p. 199 ; *Farhan-i-Kardani*, f. 32 b. *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, ff. 21 ab.



The revenue manuals of the period invariably instruct the assessing officer to offer option to the assessee to choose one of the different methods of assessment. But how far the officers on the spot complied with the order of the Revenue Ministry is uncertain.

### Bhaoli

The third method of assessment was known as *bhaoli* i.e. crop-sharing or division of crops or grain at the rate agreed upon by the parties concerned. The *bhaoli* arrangement could be made in two forms, namely *khushabatai* and *ghalla batai*. The *khusha batai* consisted of the division of sheafs between the State and the peasants at the rate of 1/2, 1/3, 1/4 or 1/5, and the *khassra* was prepared accordingly. The *ghalla bhaoli*, generally known by its Hindi synonym *chunar batai* consisted of the actual division of grain.<sup>43</sup> The *khassra-i-bhaoli* contained the following entries:<sup>44</sup>

- ✓ 1. Name of the *asami*
- ✓ 2. Length of the field
- ✓ 3. Breadth of the field
4. Total area
5. Total produce
6. Share of the ryots
7. ✓ Share of the government
- ✓ 8. Total expenses.

It appears that the division of grain took place after the necessary deduction for expenses incurred on cultivation had been made<sup>45</sup> and *jamabandi* was prepared accordingly. (There is evidence that the *bhaoli* arrangement could be made even at the beginning of the year if a request was made by the ryots. In such an assessment the *patta-i-bhaoli* was duly written and handed over to the ryots.) It stated that in accordance with the request made by the *Muqaddams*, the ryots and cultivators of the said village; the assessment based on the estimated *jama* for the previous year was made and with the stipulation that when the crops were ripe the stipulated conditions would be fulfilled.<sup>46</sup> The official attitude towards *bhaoli* is well expressed in the dictum *batai lutai ast*<sup>47</sup> i.e. sharing is loot" (on the part of the peasants). Sharing required great vigilance and constant supervision entailing some extra expenses, most probably shared by the government and the peasants alike, thus resulting in the decrease of the total revenue of the State. Moreover, in spite

43. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 71b, 72a; cf. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 199; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 32b; *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, f. 13ab; elsewhere this method of assessment is referred to as *galla bakhshi* or *batai*.

44. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 72 a.

45. *Diwan-i-Pasand* f. 81.

46. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 62b.

47. *Ibid*, 71b.



of the best efforts of the local officers the chances of the misappropriation of a part of the produce could never be eliminated till the actual division took place. Hence the aptness of the above dictum and the official reluctance to undertake the sharing arrangement. In such an arrangement the initiative must have been invariably taken by the peasants, and it was normally the duty of the assessing officer to accede to their request. Nevertheless in actual practice the assessing officer must have been sufficiently armed with the discretionary power to decide otherwise and justify his action on the ground that such an arrangement was bound to result in loss to the State.

#### Amal-i-khwat

This method of assessment involved the measurement of the cultivated land with a *jarib* and the preparation of *muntakhab*.<sup>48</sup> The *jamabandi* was prepared on the basis of *khewat-i-ajnas* for the *pargana*.<sup>49</sup> The meaning of the term *khewat-i-ajnas* is not very clear, but it probably meant the paper showing crop-rates or tax assessed in terms of grain.<sup>50</sup> If the above assumption is correct, the method of assessment referred to as *khewat* signified a variant form of *zabt*. The reference to *muntakhab* shows that assessment was made of the entire village rather than of individual holdings.

#### Amal-i-jinsi

This consisted in the summary estimate of the produce on the threshing ground and it was stated in the agreement entered into by the ryots under which the payment was to be made in kind.<sup>51</sup>

#### Sarbasta

This method of assessment appears to have been a summary assessment and the manual lays down that the assessing officer should not make a summary assessment for the entire *pargana*. In case a summary assessment for the entire *pargana* was made, the distribution of *jama* over the villages

48. This paper showed the total area under each of the crops sown in the village and was used for preparing the *jama* for the entire village as against the individual peasant. If the collections were to be made from the individual peasants the *jama-bandi* showed the total area cultivated by a peasant along with the area under each of the crops. Refer to *Diwan-i-Pasand*, ff. 12b, 13a.

49. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 72ab.

50. *Khewat* was the record of shares in which coparcenary village was distributed; assessment with the ryots according to their shares; recorded rent of settlement or assessment (Wilson's Glossary, pp. 285, 584). If the word *khewat* occurs in the sense of the record rent of settlement or assessment we can infer that *khewat-i-ajnas* refers to the paper showing the amount of assessment in terms of grain.

51. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 72 ab.



was not to be left in the hands of the *Chaudharis* and the *Qanungos*.<sup>52</sup> Such a practice, it is pointed out in the text,<sup>53</sup> gave them an opportunity of shifting the *jama*, assessed for their own villages, on to other villages and thus pocket the entire income from their own villages.<sup>54</sup> However, no specific injunction was issued against the summary assessment of a single village. We may, therefore, assume that summary assessment for a village or even for a *pargana* was in existence, but it was definitely disapproved by the higher authorities.

### 7. *Tashkhis-i-naqdi*

Under Akbar *naqdi* signified a lump sum assessment collected in cash. In the passage under reference it has been obviously used in the sense of a detailed method of assessment. The method of assessment known as *naqdi* was too well known during the period to need any description. It is also important to note that *zabt* finds no mention in the chapter on the methods of assessment and collection. We have to seek an explanation of the term *naqdi* in other sources. In fact, the term has been described in a work of the early nineteenth century. *Naqdi* is clearly described as a method of assessment. It involved measurement of the land under cultivation, an enquiry into the local conditions relating to agricultural produce, and a study of the list of current prices in order to formulate the cash-rates. The definition of *naqdi*, as given in a manual of early nineteenth century, establishes the fact beyond any doubt that *naqdi* was only another name for *zabt*. It was the counterpart of *bhaoli* in which the collections were made in cash.<sup>55</sup>

The information about the methods of assessment summarised above can be supplemented by evidence contained in the *Diwan-i-Pasand*, compiled in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. This manual on the land-revenue administration takes note of *zabt*, *bhaoli*, and of a method of assessment which on the basis of its description can be safely identified with *nasdaq*. The *khassas* of *zabt*, *kankut* and *bhaoli* have been reproduced with the same details as in the *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*. We are furnished with some insight into the working of the assessment arrangement by the brief introduction which precedes the reproduction of *siyaha-i-tashkhis* of the village in the *Diwan-i-Pasand*.<sup>56</sup> The author introduces us to the agrarian conditions and assessment arrangements by saying that the land-revenue settlement of a village (literally affairs) was generally made with the *zaimindars*. In preparing the *jama* the assessing officer was required to measure the

52. Ibid, f. 66 ab.

53. Ibid, ff. 66 b.

54. Ibid, f. 66 b.

55. Add. 6603, f. 79 a.

56. *Diwan-i-Pasand*, ff. 9b, 10a, 18ab, 21ab.



land under cultivation, prepare its *muntakhab*, i.e. a brief statement of the total area under each crop, and then calculate and prepare the *jamabandi* (rent roll) accordingly.<sup>57</sup> The *zamindars* agreed to the assessed *jama* for the village and accepted the payment of the same by a written deed of acceptance (*qabuliyat*). The method of assessment described in the passage under reference seems to be *zabt* arrangement for the entire village with the *zamindars*. It appears that the *zabt* arrangement could be made in another form by assessing the holdings of individual cultivators on the basis of  *khasra-i-khatabandi*, a register showing the area under various crops belonging to individual cultivators. Such a practice was known as *amal-i-kham* and under this arrangement assessment was made of the individual cultivator's holdings and the revenue was directly collected from him. Such an arrangement was made when the *zamindars* did not agree to the *zabt* arrangement or expressed their inability to collect revenue from the ryots. However, if the assessing officer felt that either of the two methods of assessment would ruin the *zamindars* or the latter pointed out that the method would cause financial distress and would adversely affect their social status, recourse could be had to a third method of assessment. Under this system the village *jama* was to be assessed on the basis of estimated *jama* for the current year prepared by a government officer, the arrears and receipts for the last year, the comparative *jama* figures for the preceding ten years and the estimated *jama* obtained from the *Qanungos* and others who possessed all the necessary information about the village. The assessment arrangement was to be made with the *zamindars* and they had to sign an agreement, accepting the assessed *jama* and undertaking to pay the dues to the government. Such an assessment could be made for two or three years. The lease-deed (*patta*) was handed over to the *zamindar* who in turn submitted the deed of acceptance (*qabuliyat*).<sup>58</sup>

The method of assessment just described deserves careful consideration as it contained the essential elements of that method of assessment which under the Great Mughals was known as *nasdaq*. Like *nasdaq*, the method of assessment described in the *Diwan-i-Pasand* was based on the records for the previous ten years and on figures showing arrears and receipts for the previous year. Under Aurangzeb the arrangement could be made and was generally made with the *Muqaddams* and the *zamindars* but it was invariably made on an annual basis. Under the method of assessment described in the *Diwan-i-Pasand* it could be made for two or three years. Thus this arrangement was periodical rather than annual. The third method of assessment described in the *Diwan-i-Pasand* can be regarded as *nasdaq* in the sense that it was made with the *zamindars* on the basis of previous record, but it differed from *nasdaq* in as much as it was a periodical rather

57. Ibid, ff. 15 ab.

58. *Diwan-i-Pasand* ff. 15b, 16a.



than an annual arrangement. It therefore appears that the method of assessment, described in the *Diwan-i-Pasand*, was a variation of *nasag* and it prepared the ground for the British arrangement of periodical and permanent settlements.

This completes the re-statement of the methods of assessment described in the sources of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. We also learn a few facts about the regional distribution of the various methods of assessment from a memorandum prepared in the year 1788 A.D. and preserved in the British Museum. It gives an account of the various units of land measurement along with the methods of assessment in use in different parts of northern India.<sup>59</sup> In Awadh we are told the area of a *bigha* was determined in more than one way and the revenue demand on the ryots was fixed per *bigha*. This justifies the inference that in Awadh *zabt* was more prevalent.<sup>60</sup> In Allahabad also the common method of assessment seems to have been *zabt*. In the Panjab in the areas under the *zamindars* assessment was made by the method of *ghallabakhshi* and the share of the *zamindar* was fixed at one-half or one-third of the produce. In the territories under the king *zabt* was in use and the *bigha* was equal to 60 × 60 yards. After the measurement was completed the assessment and collections were made in cash. In the province of Shahjahanabad, measurement and sharing appear to have existed side by side and the share of the state was fixed at one-half or one-third of the produce.

In a report, prepared in 1777, describing the pre-British system of land-revenue administration in Bengal,<sup>61</sup> we are told that in Bihar the majority of the *mahals* were assessed in cash. Leases were issued stating the amount due as land-revenue and collections were to be made under the usual *abwab*.<sup>62</sup> In some of the villages *kankut* was in operation, and collections were made through the *Amins*, the farmers and the *zamindars*.

An examination of the evidence summarised above reveals that the various methods of assessments such as *zabt*, *kankut* and *ghalla bakhshi* existed side by side in different parts of northern India. At the same time we hear about some new methods of assessment for the first time. These were *sarbasta*, *amal-i-khwat* and *amal-i-jinsi* and a method of assessment that may be regarded as a variant of *nasag*. These methods of assessment might have been in use in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but they are not on record. It is quite probable that they were confined to certain localities, and were therefore not mentioned in the works compiled at the Centre. It is also possible that they were evolved in the course of the last

59. Add. 6586 ff. 164 ab.

60. According to the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mabdi Ali Khan* in the early 19th century in the sarkar Bahraich, in Awadh, the prevalent systems of assessment were *naqdi* and *kankut* (See *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mabdi Ali Khan*, ff. 2 ab).

61. Report of the Rai Rayan and Qanungos, Add. 6592 f. 112b;

62. Customary dues over and above the land revenue.



quarter of the seventeenth or in the beginning of the eighteenth century in order to meet the demands of the changed agrarian conditions. It is important to note that *hast-o-bud*, comparatively so little known under the Great Mughals, had come to occupy, in some regions, a position of considerable importance and indeed it was recommended as the best of all the assessment arrangements.

Secondly, the assessing officers were enjoined to be generous in giving the peasants and the *zamindars* the option of choosing one of the various methods of assessment current in the imperial territory. This is the inference which the manuals invariably suggest. However, it may be pointed out that the evidence in the manuals should be read as representing a bias towards theory rather than practice. The local or regional practice was bound to affect adversely the right of an individual peasant or *zamindar* to opt for a particular method of assessment. The discretionary powers vested in the assessing officer must have also largely determined the adoption of a particular method of assessment for a given locality. Thirdly, we learn that the *jamabandi* could be prepared in two ways: it could be prepared either on the basis of *muntakhab*, showing the area under each crop and the assessment made against the entire village to be collected from the *zamindars* or it was prepared on the basis of *khasra-i-khatabandi*, the paper showing the areas under various crops, as well as the holdings of individual cultivators under various crops and the collections begin made from individual cultivators. In other words, in one case the revenue demand was shown against the entire village and in other against the holdings of individual peasants. It appears that the former was the general practice while the latter was an exception. The collections were generally made from the *zamindars* or through them. In case the *zamindars* expressed their inability to collect the land-revenue from the ryots and therefore did not agree to engage for the assessed land revenue, the collections could directly be made from individual peasants on the basis of *jamabandi*, showing the assessment against individual cultivators. Thus normally the tendency was towards the village assessment and the collections were made through or from the *zamindars*. The fact that generally the assessment was made for the entire village is corroborated by the meagre evidence contained in the documents belonging to the reign of Aurangzeb and Muhammad Shah. We learn from these documents that the unit of assessment was the village and the *zamindars* and *Muqaddams* entered into a written agreement to collect the assessed *jama* and remit it to the treasury<sup>63</sup>.

It remains to ascertain whether the detailed assessment was made every year on the spot or was just a matter of revising the recorded *jama* noting the increase or decrease in the area under cultivation or other factors affecting productivity. The chapters in the revenue literature dealing with

63. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, 34b; *Dastu-ul-Ama'i-Bekas*, f. 66 ab.



the methods of assessment generally lay down that the assessing officer, at the beginning of the year, should personally inspect each field in the village, supervise the assessment operations and fix the annual *jama*. However, the evidence contained in the *Khulasat-us-Siyad* and the *Diwan-i-Pasand* clearly suggests that it was the usual practice to assess *jama* on the basis of previous records, and actual detailed assessment was made only when such a demand was made by the *zamindars* or the peasants.

### Mode of payment

Payment in cash was a well-established practice during Akbar's reign but the *Amil* was also instructed to accept payment in kind in case the peasant was not willing to pay in cash. The peasants were, however, generally required and encouraged to pay the revenue demand in cash as each instalment fell due<sup>64</sup>. Absence of instructions on record regulating the disposal of grain indicate that payment in kind was probably made on a very limited scale and as such no general rules were framed. Subsequent evidence belonging to the closing years of Aurangzeb's reign and to post-Aurangzeb period substantially corroborate the inference that payment in cash was the general practice in the larger part of the Empire. The assessment accounts reproduced in administrative manuals show that even in areas where *kankut* and *bhaoli* were in operation the share of the State calculated in grain was commuted into cash<sup>65</sup>. According to the author of the *Diwan-i-Pasand* the revenue demand on each peasant in *bhaoli* was fixed in grain but it was commuted and realised in cash and the grain was left with the peasant<sup>66</sup>. Similarly, the undertakings signed by the *Muqaddams*, the *zamindars* and the *Chaudharis*, and reproduced in the administrative literature of the period, show that land-revenue was assessed in cash and that the signatories were accountable for the payment of the amount stipulated in the agreements<sup>67</sup>. To quote from the *Khulasat-us-Siyag* the village of Aurangshahpur in Kirtapur *pargana* was assessed at Rs. 525/- and the *Muqaddam* signed a written agreement to pay the assessed amount stated in the lease-deed<sup>68</sup>. We read elsewhere in a work compiled in the last quarter of the eighteenth century that in the imperial territories in the Panjab measurement was the practice and the *Amil* collected land-revenue according to the entries in the lease-deed stating the revenue demand in cash<sup>69</sup>.

64. *Akbar Nama*, II pp. 382, 383; *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, pp. 199-201; *Agrarian System of Moslem India*, Moreland, p. 114.

65. *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, ff. 13 ab, 15a; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 33b;

66. *Diwan-i-Pasand*, f. 21b.

67. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 66, 67 68; *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, f. 11b; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 34a.

68. *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, f. 11b.

69. Add. 6586, f. 164a.



Thus the available evidence indicates that payment in cash was the general practice. However, local customs and practices and the agrarian conditions prevailing in a particular area might have provided sufficient justification for a deviation from the practice, and in such cases the probability of payment in kind cannot be altogether ruled out.

The payment of land-revenue demand was made in instalments of four or six spread over the entire year and the amount of each instalments was specifically stated both in the written agreement and in the lease-deed<sup>70</sup>.

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70. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, ff. 34ab, 35a; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 67.



## CHAPTER IV

### LAND-REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

#### Section I

The assessment and collection of land-revenue was entrusted to the *diwan-i-wizarat* or Revenue Ministry which worked at four different levels, namely, the centre, the province, the *sarkar* and the *pargana*. It was carried on by a hierarchy of revenue officials headed by the *Diwan-i-kul* or *Wazir*, also known as *Diwan-i-ala*.<sup>1</sup>

While Akbar made caseless efforts to improve the methods of assessment and collection he also paid equal attention to the creation and development of a suitable administrative machinery which could ensure the smooth working of the land-revenue administration. The reorganisation of provinces on a more scientific basis, the creation of *wizarat* or the Revenue Ministry as a distinct ministry, independent of the *Wakil*, and the creation of the office of the provincial *Diwan* as the direct representative of the *Wazir* may be taken as the original contribution of Akbar to the land-revenue administration. The administrative machinery evolved under his two immediate successors continued to function till the middle of the eighteenth century with a few modifications which did not affect its structure to any appreciable extent.

#### *The Wazir*

The origin of the office of *Diwan-i-kul* may be traced back to the 8th regnal year of Akbar when Muzaffar Khan was appointed the *Diwan-i-kul* or *Wazir*.<sup>2</sup> The reigns of Akbar and Jahangir may be regarded as a period of experiments and evolution. By the time of Shah Jahan the evolution of the office of *Diwan-i-kul* or *Diwan-i-ala* had been completed,

1. Discussing the significance of the term *Diwan*, the late Mr. Ibn-i-Hasan says: "Under the Mughals its use is more definite and is limited to the head of the Revenue and Finance. Under Akbar the word "vazir" is sparingly used for the office and the use of *divan* is more frequent. Under Jahangir the order is just the reverse and the term "vazir" is more or less maintained while under Shahjahan the word becomes more exact. The *vazir* is termed *divan-i-kul* (the chief *divan*) and his colleagues in the department are called *divans*". *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, p. 148.

2. *Akbar Nama*, II, p. 197, the text reads as *Wizarat-i-diwan-i-kul*.



the Revenue Ministry was divided into a number of departments under the overall control and supervision of the *Diwan-i-kul*, and business was transacted in conformity with well-defined and elaborate regulations.<sup>3</sup>

During the reign of Aurangzeb the head of the Revenue Ministry was described as *Wazir* or even as *Wazir-i-azam* and *Wazir-i-muazzam*.<sup>4</sup> However, in the administrative and accountancy manuals he has been referred to as the *Diwan-i-ala*.<sup>5</sup> The inference is that the two terms were interchangeable, and whereas the chronicles described the head of the Revenue Ministry as *Wazir*, technically he was known as the *Diwan-i-ala*. Under the later Mughals the chronicles refer to him as the *Wazir*.

### Power and Position of the *Wazir*

The wide range of power and authority of the *Diwan-i-ala* extended over almost all the administrative activities of the Empire. His competence to recommend the appointments of the imperial executive and revenue officers, such as the *Subadars*, the *Diwans*, the *Faujdar*, the *Amins* and the *Karoris*, and all the treasury officers, and his supervision and control over the assignments and grant of *madad-maash* lands tended to concentrate all executive, revenue and financial authority in him. It was probably to highlight this fact that in the official documents he was described as *madar-ul-mahmai* and *jumdat-ul-mulki*.<sup>6</sup> That he was the highest administrative authority who exercised control over all revenue and administrative matters may be inferred from the account of his office given in the administrative manuals.

According to the author of the *Farhang-i-Kardani* the Empire depended on the *Diwan-i-ala* and all authority vested in him, and he was competent to deal with all revenue and administrative problems.<sup>7</sup> In the *Khulasat-us-Siyaq* the *Diwan-i-ala* has been described as one who looked after the revenue and administrative matters as well as religious and secular affairs. It was he who enforced imperial regulations and executed royal orders. He endeavoured to increase the wealth of the royal treasury and promoted the welfare of the soldiers and the ryots. He appointed *Amils* who brought prosperity to the people, and dismissed those who exercised oppression.<sup>8</sup> We read elsewhere that the office of the *Diwan* was the highest administrative position in the realm. All other officers such as the *Bakhshi*, the *Mir-i-*

3. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire* pp. 304-307.

4. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 235; *Maasir-ul-Umara*, I, part I, pp. 310, 313, part II, pp. 531, 532, 533, *Alamgir Nama*, pp. 832, 837.

5. *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, f. 15b; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mujamalai*, f. 144a; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, ff. 27b, 28a.

6. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, f. 173a.

7. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 27b.

8. *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, f. 15a.



*saman*, the *Mushrifis*, the *Tahwildars* and the *zamindars* were subordinate to him.<sup>9</sup>

An examination of the evidence, adduced above, indicates that

- (1) the *Diwan-i-ala* was the highest administrative authority in the Empire,
- (2) he enjoyed power and authority which extended beyond the affairs of the Revenue Ministry, and
- (3) all administrative activities were under his control and supervision.

### Functions

A study of the functions of the *Diwan-i-ala* and the working of the Revenue Ministry, as given in the administrative manuals, only serves to corroborate the observations made in the above lines. The evidence points to the fact that the powers and functions of the *Diwan-i-ala* were wide and covered a wide range of administrative activities. These included the appointment of imperial servants, transaction of public business in the office, signing various documents and papers, hearing the complaints of the people and the disposal of petitions submitted by the *wakils* of *mansabdars* and other officers.<sup>10</sup>

### Appointments

All the important appointments of government servants appear to have been made on his recommendations. The papers dealing with such appointments were maintained in the office of the *Diwan-i-khalisa*. These appointments included the following<sup>11</sup> :

- (a) *Subadars*, *Faujdaris*, *Karoris*, *Amins* and *Mushrifis* of the *mahals*.
- (b) The officers of the imperial treasuries such as the *Futadars*, the *Baramad-nawis*, the *Daroghas*, the *Amins* and the *Mushrifis*.
- (c) *Sazawals* or marshals, appointed to collect papers from various officers.
- (d) *Amins* and *Karoris* of the *pai baqi* or *mahals* resumed by the government but earmarked for assignment.
- (e) *Tahsildars* or collectors to realise the State dues.
- (f) *Zamindars*.

9. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, f. 112a.

10. *Ibid*, ff. 144b ; *Zawabit-i-Almagiri*, f. 32b.

11. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, f. 144b ; *Zawabit-i-Alamgiri*, f. 32b.



## Signatures

The fact that he put his signature on many important documents, accounts and registers<sup>12</sup> indicates his jurisdiction and control over the working of the various departments. He put his signature on the reverse of *farmans*, (including those granting *madadmaash* lands), *parwanas*, *tamassuks* or undertakings given by the office holders and their sureties, *yaddasht* or memoranda and *fard-i-haqiqat* or recommendations concerning *jagirs*. The *siyahs* or proceedings of the offices of the *Bakshis* were not valid if they did not bear his signature. He also put his signature on:

- (1) the *siyaha* and *daul*<sup>13</sup> of *jagir* and *naqdi*.<sup>14</sup>
- (2) the *taujihi*<sup>15</sup> of *mansabdars*, stationed in the provinces.
- (3) reports about the remission of cash to the *pargana* and provincial treasuries.
- (4) petitions submitted by *madad-maash* holders.

Apart from the office work of dealing with the files and papers, the *Diwan-i-ala* also heard the complaints made by the people through the *Darogha-i-faryadiyan* (superintendent of petitioners). Similarly the *wakils* of the *mansabdars* and other officers represented the cases of their clients to the *Diwan-i-ala*.<sup>16</sup>

It appears that he exercised direct control over the *Subadars*, the *Diwans* and the *Waqaa-i-nawis*. Before leaving for their respective assignments, they came to pay a courtsey visit to the *Wazir* who gave them pertinent instructions and advice.<sup>17</sup>

## Departments of the Ministry

The Revenue Ministry was organised into more than one branch or department. The most important departments were those of the *Diwan-i-khalisa*, the *Diwan-i-tan*, the *Mustaufi*, and the *Darul-Insha* or the department dealing with the preparation of the *farmans* and other royal orders.<sup>18</sup> Other sections in the Revenue Ministry dealt with *madad-maash* grants and the salaries of persons who were paid in cash. The *Diwan-i-khalisa* and the *Diwan-i-tan* were the principal officers who served under the *Diwan-i-ala*.<sup>19</sup>

12. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 144ab, 145a; *Zawabit-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 31-30b, 37b, 147.

ab. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 31b; *Zawabit-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 93b, 95b.

13. *daul*: paper showing the estimate of the salaries of the *mansabdars*.

14. *naqdi*: salaries paid in cash; also-refers to *mansabdars* paid in cash.

15. *taujihi*: a description roll.

16. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, f. 147a; *Zawabit-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 86b, 93a.

17. *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, ff. 8ab, 9ab.

18. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 141a-146a; *Zawabit-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 36b, 37a.

19. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 34a, 35a.



*Diwan-i-khalisa*

The *Diwan-i-khalisa* was appointed direct by order of the Emperor on the recommendation of the *Diwan-i-ala*. His office maintained a number of records and received revenue papers from the provinces and the *par-ganas*.<sup>20</sup> He put his signature on the *parwanas* with the remark "was seen". Papers relating to the appointments of all the imperial officers such as the *Subadars*, the *Diwans*, the *Faujdars*, the *Kolwals*, etc., were disposed of in his office. He signed the appointment orders of the *Diwans*, the *Faujdars* and the *Amins*. His office prepared the rent rolls (*tumars* of the *jama*) of the *khalisa mahals* and maintained the papers pertaining to the salaries of the ladies of the royal family. A number of papers were sent to his office by the provincial *Diwans*, the *Amins*, the *Karoris*, the *mutasaddis* of *mahal-sair* and treasury officers.<sup>21</sup> The *Diwan-i-khalisa* prepared the rent roll (*tumar-i-jama*) of the Empire and put it up before the Emperor.<sup>22</sup>

*Diwan-i-tan*

The *Diwan-i-tan* who was entrusted with the appointment of *mansabdars* and the assignment of *jagirs* prepared the *fard-i-haqiat* of the assignment. His office maintained a number of papers dealing with assignment, *pai baqi*, specific reports about the *zamindars*, the *daul-i-jagirs* of the *Subadars*, the rent roll of *pai baqi*, the ranks of *mansabdars* etc.<sup>23</sup> He was furnished with the list of *mansabdars*, *hasil* figures for every year, *siyaha-i-dagh-o-tashihah* (detailed report of branding and verification), and sureties' undertakings (*tamasuks*).<sup>24</sup>

*Mustaufi*

The functions of the *Mustaufi* was to audit the accounts of the *Amils*. The audit showed separately the sums to be realised from the *Amils* and the ryots. A statement of the outstanding dues against the *Amil* was placed before the *Diwan* who could allow remissions. After remissions had been made, the *Amil* had to execute an undertaking to make early payment of the balance. The unrealised revenue from the ryots was shown as arrears against them and the newly appointed *Amils* gave an undertaking to realise these and remit them to the treasury.<sup>25</sup> The *Mustaufi* was required to see

20. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 27b.

21. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 141a-148b; *Zawabit-i-Alamgiri*, ff. 34a-35a.

22. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 28a.

23. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, ff. 29ab; *Ilm-i-Nawisindigi*, f. 156a.

24. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, f. 146ab., *Zawabit-i-Alamgiri* ff. 35b-36b; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, 4. 30a.

25. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mujamalai*, ff. 109b.



that the outstanding dues were realised from the *Amils* within a specified period. Certificates of remittance to the treasury were obtained from them and kept in the Record Office.

The *Mustaufi* received a number of papers from the *Amils*. His office also maintained some papers including an abstract account of the collections and expenses made by the *Amils* and an account of the receipts and disbursement of cash in the custody of the *Futadars*.<sup>26</sup>

### The Emperor and the *Wazir*

The *Wazirs* under Aurangzeb such as Fazil Khan, Jafar Khan and Asad Khan were men possessing large administrative and military experience,<sup>27</sup> who enjoyed the confidence of the sovereign for their loyalty, efficiency, integrity and meritorious services. But as the Emperor himself took personal interest in the details of the work done by the *Wazir*,<sup>28</sup> it was unlikely that any of his *Wazirs* could entertain any idea of contravening the wishes of the Emperor. They, however, continued to have the status of the most important civil servants, who could be given a military or political assignment.

With the accession of Bahadur Shah, a definite change in the position of the *Wazir* can be easily noticed. A study of the chronicles shows that the successive *Wazirs* under the later Mughals claimed the title to their high office as a right in recognition of the military services rendered by them in winning the crown for the emperor or in overthrowing his adversaries. It was on this ground that the appointments of Munim Khan, Zulfiqar Khan, Abdullah Khan and Muhammad Amin Khan<sup>29</sup> were made. However, after the death of his father, Qamar-ud-Din Khan claimed the office as a hereditary right but his claim was set aside in favour of Nizam-ul-Mulk.<sup>30</sup> The appointment was made partly to put an end to the struggle for the office of the *wizarat* between Qamar-ud-Din Khan and Khan-i-Dauran,<sup>31</sup> the Emperor's candidate. But the real reason behind the appointment was that Nizam-ul-Mulk was the most powerful noble in the Empire and held the important *subadari* of the Deccan. To alienate or displease him might endanger the imperial hold on the Deccan. Further, in order to win his support for the fast disintegrating Empire, it was deemed necessary that he should be won over. But within two years of his appointment he left Delhi in order to avoid an open conflict with the Em-

26. Ibid, ff. 110b.

27. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, I, Part I, pp. 310, 311, 312; part II, pp. 531, 532, 533.

28. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, I, Part I, p. 355.

29. The account of the appointments and the circumstances responsible for these appointments can be read in the *Later Mughals* by William Irvine.

30. *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, ff. 130b, 131a.

31. *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, ff. 130b, 131a; *Later Mughals*, Irvine, II, p. 105.



peror on the question of reforming the administration. After his departure from Delhi the office was conferred upon Qamar-ud-Din Khan who continued to be the acknowledged leader of a strong Mughal force numbering some 7,000 soldiers.<sup>32</sup>

Thus under the later Mughals the claim to the office of the *Wazir* was based on :

- (1) Valuable military service rendered in winning the crown for the Emperor or in overthrowing his open adversaries.
- (2) The recognition of the fact that the claimant was deemed to be the most powerful noble of the Empire and his support could give stability to the disintegrating Empire.

The appointment to the office of the *Wazir* on these grounds was a distinct departure from the practice under Aurangzeb. It reflected a change in the relative positions of the Emperor and the *Wazir*. The appointment to the office came to be regarded more as a right and claim than as a favour shown by the Emperor in recognition of administrative ability and experience. It also emphasised the fact that the office of the *Wazir* was no longer essentially a civil assignment ; it tended to be political and military in character. On the whole it meant an accretion to the power and position of the *Wazir* and a corresponding weakening of the power and prestige of the sovereign. In this development we can trace the undoing of Akbar's long and ceaseless efforts to reduce the holder of this office to the status of the head of the Révenue Ministry.

It may be pointed out that the new situation weakened the power and position of the *Wazir* and the Emperor alike. It is true that temperaments of Bahadur Shah and his well-meaning *Wazir*, Munim Khan, and their cordial relations with each other did not create any serious difficulty. But the change in the nature and character of the office and the relative position of the *Wazir* and the Emperor could easily bring the two into conflict with each other, and in the event of such a conflict the *Wazir* was bound to stake every thing to capture the real power in the State. Such a conflict would sap the vitality and administrative stability of the Empire and contribute to the fall of the Mughal Empire. This actually happened in the reign of Bahadur Shah and was realised by the contemporaries. The author of the *Tarikh Shakir-i-Khani*, for example, states that the Empire saw the beginning of its disintegration in the reign of Bahadur Shah when the Emperor passed over the claims of the old and loyal Asad Khan in favour of those of Munim Khan to the office of the *Wazir*. Asad Khan was the most qualified person for the office of the *Wazir*, but he was asked to accept the office of the *Wakil*. To keep up the pretence of a loyal and obedient servant Asad Khan complied with the royal order but he refused to put his heart into the assignment given to him. This was really the beginning

32. *Abwal-ul-Khawagin*, f. 184a.



of the distintegration of the Mughal Empire which, with the passage of time, gathered momentum.<sup>33</sup>

The story of the inevitable conflict and the political developments which followed can be read elsewhere. For the present study it is important to note that as the conflict centred round the office of the *Wazir* it adversely affected the working of the land-revenue administration at various levels, especially at the Centre. To it we now turn our attention.

### Working of the Revenue Ministry

Munim Khan was appointed *Wazir* in 1707 and remained in that office till February 1711. His tenure was free from corruption and indifference to the business of State. On the contrary he took a keen interest in the details of administration and was scrupulous in enforcing the procedure laid down for transacting the affairs of State. During his *wizarat* attempts were even made to introduce certain reforms,<sup>34</sup> the most important being the reform in the mode of charging the *mansabdars* for the food of the animals and horses maintained by the central government. It amounted to a total remission of the demand made under this head and came as a great relief to the hard pressed *jagirdars*. The people were free from every kind of oppression and the contemporary historian Khafkhan remembers him with gratitude.<sup>35</sup> On the whole he was regarded as a successful *Wazir* who transacted the business of State in a commendable way.<sup>36</sup>

Jahandar Shah's *Wazir*, Zulfiqar Khan, followed the Emperor's example. He gave himself up to sensual gratification and had little time to attend to the business of State. He delegated his authority to Sabha Chand, the *Diwan-i-tan*. All available evidence suggests that this step led to confusion and to the neglect of State business for the first time. The practice of revenue-farming was introduced. The *Wazir* was charged with niggardliness, as he blocked the promotion of his subordinates.<sup>37</sup>

However, it was in the reign of Farrukh Siyyar that the conflict between the Emperor and his *Wazir* came to a head. It started over the question of appointments to the offices of the *Diwan* and the *Sadr* in the very beginning of his reign.<sup>38</sup> In spite of many attempts to reach a compromise in order to ensure the smooth transaction of State business, the affairs of the Revenue Ministry were thrown into confusion. In the struggle for supremacy in regard to important decisions and their enforcement the *Wazir*

33. *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, f. 50a.

34. See the Section dealing with *jagir* lands.

35. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 675.

36. *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, f. 113b.

37. *Later Mughals*, Irvine, I, p. 197.

38. *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, f. 122a.



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34. See the Section dealing with *jagir* lands.

35. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 675.

36. *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, f. 113b.

37. *Later Mughals*, Irvine, I, p. 197.

38. *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, f. 122a.



generally had the upper hand and gradually all real power to administer the Empire passed into the hands of his own *Diwan*, Ratan Chand. Owing to the latter's interference in the work of every department, the proper procedures and practices of transacting State business were violated. The evil practice of farming the *khalisa* lands became widespread, corruption became rampant and appointments to various offices could be secured by paying *peshkash*.<sup>39</sup>

It appears that corruption had crept into the Revenue Ministry as early as 1124 A.H./1714 A.D. At the same time its smooth working suffered on account of disagreement on the methods of transacting the business of State. The *Wazir* and his brother, Husain Ali Khan, the *Amir-ul-Umara*, demanded that appointments, award of *mansabs* or any increase in them should not be made, nor any other administrative action taken without the recommendation of and consultation with the two brothers. The Emperor held the contrary opinion. He appointed Mir Jumla as his deputy or representative and authorised him to affix his signature on his behalf. The Emperor repeatedly declared that the word and signature of Mir Jumla were to be treated as his own word and signature. This created a serious difficulty in the transaction of State business. The situation was further aggravated by the unrestricted power exercised by Ratan Chand, the *Wazir's Diwan*. He was given full powers to deal with the affairs of the Empire and those of the Revenue Ministry. He did not dispose of any petition unless he had received a large sum from the petitioner as gratification for himself and his master. On the other hand, any one who visited Mir Jumla in connection with the award of a *mansab* or an increase in it or appointment to some post or office was favoured. He put his signature as the deputy or representative of the Emperor without demanding any gratification. Such a practice was, however, in contravention of the regulations of the Revenue Ministry and it impaired the power and prestige of the Sayyid brothers.<sup>40</sup>

By 1718, the *Wazir* appears to have triumphed. Ratan Chand, Abdullah Khana's *Diwan*, had acquired so much power and authority over the various departments that the *mutasaddis* were left without any power in their respective departments. This was true especially of revenue affairs. He wielded so much power that the *Diwan-i-tan* and *Diwan-i-khalisa* were reduced to mere ciphers. He leased out the *khalisa parganas* in revenue-farming as if they were purchase and sale transactions and made lacs of rupees. This antagonised the Emperor further.<sup>41</sup>

By this time the offices of the *Diwan-i-khalsia* and *Diwan-i-tan* were held by Itisam Khan and Rai Rayan Jahan Shahi respectively. The two

39. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* II, pp. 739, 775, 776.

*Siyar-ul-Mutaakhhbirin*, II, pp. 407, 408.

40. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, o. 739.

41. *Ibid*, II, p. 773.



officers were placed in a rather difficult position. They wanted to please the Emperor without antagonising the *Wazir*. Itisam Khan was more favourably inclined towards the Emperor whereas Rai Rayan wanted to please Abdullah Khan. For this reason they met with criticism from all sides and were forced to resign their offices. In 1129 A.H. Itisam Khan actually resigned and Inayatullah Khan was tipped for the offices of the *Diwan-i-khalsia* and *Diwan-i-tan*, together with the governorship of Kashmir. He was, however, not willing to accept the offer in view of the great power and authority enjoyed by the *Wazir*. Eventually, a compromise was reached and the two offices were accepted by Inayatullah Khan. The agreement between the *Wazir* and Inayatullah Khan laid down the following conditions :

- (1) Inayatullah Khan would not put up any matter pertaining to the land-revenue administration before the Emperor without previously informing the *Wazir* and obtaining his consent.
- (2) He would not directly make any recommendations for appointment to imperial offices.
- (3) Ratan Chand would not interfere in matters pertaining to the *khalisa* lands.
- (4) The *Wazir* would attend the office for transacting State business once or twice a week.<sup>42</sup>

In 1131 A.H., Inayatullah Khan came forward with certain proposals. These included re-imposition of *jizya* and decrease in and resumption of the high *mansabs* and rich *jagirs* held by the Hindus, the Kashmiris and the Khwajas, who had obtained them through fraud and manipulation. The Emperor approved of the proposals, and Inayatullah Khan decided to enforce them. This was greatly resented by Ratan Chand and by all the important officers in the Revenue Ministry. They represented their case to the *Wazir* who did not give his consent to the implementation of the new proposals. Many turned against Inayatullah. Charges and counter-charges were levelled against each other and the agreement which had been entered into between the *Wazir* and Inayatullah Khan fell through. They often quarrelled with each other but, left with no other alternative, they reluctantly worked together.<sup>43</sup>

Another event on record throws further light on the confusion which prevailed in the working of the Revenue Ministry. It appears that when the accounts of an *Amil* of the *khalisa* lands were audited a large sum was found to be outstanding against him. In order to realise the amount Inaya-

42. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 773. The text adds that on account of the Emperor's anger towards the *Wazir* and his own indulgence in carnal pleasures, the latter had not attended the office for the preceding several months and the State business had come to a stop ; also see *Siyar-ul-Mutaakhhbirin* II, p. 408.

43. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* II, pp. 773, 775 ; *Siyar-ul-Mutaakhhbirin* II, pp. 408.



tullah imprisoned the *Amil*, who had been patronised and appointed by Ratan Chand. The latter endeavoured to secure the release of the *Amil* but Inayatullah Khan remained adamant. One day the *Amil* managed to escape from prison and the former gave him the necessary protection. Inayatullah Khan reported the matter to the Emperor and the *chelas* were deputed to arrest the *Amil* at Ratan Chand's house. Sharp exchanges followed and a clash was imminent. The Emperor reprimanded Qutubu-ul-Mulk and asked him to dismiss Ratan Chand. But nothing was done by Abdullah Khan.<sup>44</sup>

After the assassination of Farrukh Siyyar, Abul Barkat ascended the throne. Under him the power and authority of Abdullah Khan increased further. Diyanat Khan was appointed the *Diwan-i-khalisa* and Raja Bhaktmal the *Diwan-i-tan*. But all the officials in the imperial offices, including those serving in the judicial department, worked as Ratan Chand's subordinates with no powers.<sup>45</sup> This state of affairs remained unchanged under Muhammad Shah. Ratan Chand continued to exercise all power and authority in administrative, revenue and judicial affairs and even the power to appoint *Qazis* in the different parts of the Empire remained vested in him.<sup>46</sup>

After the fall of the Sayyid brothers the office of the *Wazir* devolved upon Muhammad Amin Khan. It appears that he enjoyed great power and authority and the young Emperor was hardly in a position to assert himself against him. Muhammad Qasim, the author of the *Ahwat-ul-Khawagin*, has actually accused him of following in the foot-steps of the Sayyid brothers. Muhammad Amin Khan reduced the Emperor to the position of a figure-head.<sup>47</sup> However, the *Wazir* discharged the duties of his office ably and if his work had not been interrupted by his sudden death, the rules and regulations current during Aurangzeb's reign would have been effectively enforced again.<sup>48</sup> Unfortunately during his short tenure nothing could be done to put the affairs of the Revenue Ministry on a sound footing.

Nizamul Mulk was appointed *Wazir* in February 1721<sup>49</sup> and remained in office till December 1723. It appears that the enquiries made by Nizamul-Mulk, after his assumption of office, revealed that before the fall of the Sayyid brothers *mansabs* had been lavishly granted and *jagirs* assigned on an unprecedented scale to the princes, ladies of the royal family, nobles and

44. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II pp. 775, 776; *Siyar-ul-Mutaakkbkhirin*, II, p. 407.

45. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, pp. 773, 776; *Siyar-ul-Mutaakkbkhirin*, II p. 407.

46. *Ahwat-ul-Khawagin*, f. 178a; *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, f. 130.

47. *Ahwat-ul-Khawagin*, 178a.

48. *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, f. 130a; *Siyar-ul-Mutaakkbkhirin*, II, p. 455.  
*Shahnama-i-Munawwarul Kalam*, f. 86a; *Ahwat-ul-Khawagin*, f. 181b.  
*Tarikh* f. 12a; *Latter Mughals* II, p. 948.

49. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 948; *Siyar-ul-Muttaakkbkhirin*, pp. 455, 456; *Shahnama-i-Munawwar-ul-Kalam*, f. 86a.



*rajas*. This had led to a decrease in the revenues of the royal exchequer. It was also discovered that the salaries of the imperial servants who were paid in cash had greatly increased. After making full enquiries and examining the revenue papers, Nizamul Mulk submitted to the Emperor that the prevailing conditions in the land-revenue administration demanded immediate reform and that the rules and regulations which had been in force in the reign of Aurangzeb should be forthwith enforced. He also submitted a comprehensive scheme of reforms which could not be put into practice, as he found himself helpless against the combination of some of the most important nobles and the Emperor's favourites, especially against Koki, his foster-sister, Hafiz Khidmatgar Khan and Khan-i-Dauran, the *Mir Bakhshi*.<sup>50</sup>

The most influential person who actively interfered in the day-to-day working of the Revenue Ministry was Koki, a woman of great charm, tact and ability. She was entrusted with the Emperor's *qalamdam* and put her signature on behalf of the Emperor. This gave her an opportunity to receive lacs of rupees as bribe.<sup>51</sup> She took Hafiz Khidmatgar Khan, the Emperor's favourite, into confidence and received large sums from the people as *peshkash* for herself and the Emperor. She pretended that the *peshkash* was accepted in the interest of the State in order to increase the wealth of the treasury. But this was a mere pretext to cover corruption which threw the entire working of the Revenue Ministry into confusion.<sup>52</sup>

Nizam-ul-Mulk thus found himself helpless in implementing the necessary reform of transacting the business of State in accordance with rules and regulations. Left with no alternative he complained to the Emperor against Haider Quli Khan's undue interference in the affairs of the Revenue Ministry. The Emperor regarded with disapproval Haider Quli Khan's activities and his interference in the affairs of the Revenue Ministry and ordered him to leave for Gujrat. But the evil influence of Koki continued whose acceptance of bribes damaged the Emperor's reputation. Nizam-ul-Mulk asked her to refrain from this evil practice, but she ignored him and the Emperor dared not interfere.<sup>53</sup>

Thus by the year 1723 the position of the Wazir was considerably weakened and he could not exercise even those powers which actually belonged to his office. Consequently the working of the entire administration in general and that of the Revenue Ministry in particular was thrown out

50. *Shahnama-i-Mumawwarul-Kalam*, ff. 83ab, 86a; *Ahwal-ul-Khawagin*, ff. 18b, 182ab; *Siyar-ul-Mutaakhhbirin* II, pp. 455, 456.

51. *Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani*, f. 10b.

52. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 940.

53. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 947; *Ahwal-ul-Khawagin* ff. 183b, 184a. The author of the *Ahwal-ul-Khawagin* says that the administration had become child's play. The work which lay within the competence of the *Diwan* was disposed of by the *Bakhshi* and the function of the *Qazi* was performed by the *Kotwal*.



of gear, and the business of State could not be transacted as it ought to have been.<sup>54</sup>

It was soon felt that an open conflict between the Emperor and the *Wazir* was imminent and inevitable. Nizam-ul-Mulk's decision to leave Delhi in December 1723, however, saved the situation. For the next five months the functions of the *Wazir* were performed by his son Ghazi-ud-Din Khan, as his deputy. Finally, in July 1723, the office of the *Wazir* was conferred upon Qamar-ud-Din Khan.<sup>55</sup>

Now we are in a position to make a few general observations about the fluctuations in the position of the *Wazirs* since the accession of Bahadur Shah and the gradual deterioration in the working of the Revenue Ministry which accompanied them.

The available evidence shows that with the appointment of Munim Khan the power and position of the *Wazir* tended to increase and it continued to do so till the death of Muhammad Amin Khan. On the whole, it appears that the *Wazir* wielded great power inspite of the active opposition from important nobles. Being supported by the Emperor, he exercised supreme powers and could flout even the Emperor and his favourites. With the death of Muhammad Amin Khan, the history of the *Wizarat* entered a new phase. Nizam-ul-Mulk's tenure of office was marked by a definite decrease in the power and position of the *Wazir*. It appears that the forces of opposition against the increased power and position of the *Wazir* had gained considerable strength and compelled him not only to forego the exercise of his legitimate functions but also to relinquish the office itself. This new development, however, tended to worsen the working of the Revenue Ministry. Stragely enough both when the *Wazir* enjoyed undisputed power and when he was denied even the legitimate exercise of his powers and functions, the efficient and smooth working of the Revenue Ministry suffered and the administrative stability of the Empire was impaired.

The next *Wazir* Qamar-ud-Din Khan remained in office for more than 20 years.<sup>56</sup> The period of his *wizarat* was marked by a further deterioration in the working of the Revenue Ministry. In view of the more pressing problems—the inroads of the Marathas, the menace from the north-west, the increasingly independent attitude of the *Subadars*—the

54. *Ahwal*, ff. 182b, 183ab, 184ab, *Siyar* II, p. 465; *Later Mughals*, II, pp. 133, 148. It appears that later attempts were made to bring about a reconciliation between the Emperor and the *Wazir*. Nizam-ul-Mulk showed his willingness to remain in office provided the Emperor agreed to the proposed reform for abolishing the practice of revenue-farming. Ultimately the efforts failed and the *Wazir* made up his mind to proceed to the Deccan (*Later Mughals*, II, p. 136).

55. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, pp. 957, 973; *Tazkirah* 131b; *Later Mughals*, Irvine II, pp. 137, 138.

56. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, I, part I, pp. 358-361.



conflict between the *Wazir* and the Emperor had been most probably resolved or had lost much of its meaning and significance. But even in the absence of such a conflict no serious efforts were made to reorganise the administrative machinery. On the other hand, the *Wazir* and other imperial ministers showed complete indifference to the business of State. The changed atmosphere of the Court, the gaiety and frivolity of the Emperor and his *Wazir* along with the new political and military problems seem to have left them little time or inclination to reorganise the Revenue Ministry and set it on a sound footing. Most probably a stage had been reached when nothing could be done.

The author of the *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk* has left a vivid account of the confusion that prevailed in the Revenue Ministry after the departure of Nizam-ul-Mulk from the Court. The *Diwan-i-khalsa* and the *Bakhshi* gave themselves up to pleasure and neglected their duties. As a matter of fact they deemed it below their dignity to transact the business of State and left all powers in the hands of the Hindus, i.e., clerks who were generally Hindus. Consequently, the imperial administration was thrown into such a confusion that the power to appoint and dismiss the officers, to increase and reduce the *mansabs* and to disburse the salaries of the soldiers passed into the hands of the *peshkars* and clerks<sup>57</sup>.

## Section II

### PROVINCIAL AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

#### Diwan-i-suba

The creation of the office of the *Diwan-i-suba* as a direct representative of the Revenue Ministry was Akbar's work. A provincial *Diwan*, along with other officers, was appointed in every province in the 24th year of the reign.<sup>58</sup> By the 40th year of his reign the provincial *Diwan's* power and position had increased so much that he became independent of the *Subadar*. He was responsible to the Emperor through the *Diwan-i-ala* and submitted his papers direct to the *Wazir*.<sup>59</sup>

#### Appointment

The appointment of the *Diwan-i-suba* was made on the recommendation of the *Wazir*. The procedure was to furnish the necessary informa-

57. *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, f. 132a.

58. *Akbar Nama*, II, p. 670; see also *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, Ibn-i-Hasan, p. 165.

59. *Akbar Nama*, II, p. 670; see also *The Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, Ibn-i-Hasan, p. 165.



tion about the candidate in a written statement, technically known as *haqiqat*. This was submitted to the Emperor and after his approval the *Wazir* put his signature on the appointment order, technically known as *parwana-i-khidmat*.<sup>60</sup> The *Farhang-i-Kardani* contains a sample copy of a *parwana* entitled *parwana-i-khidmat-i-diwani* and *amini* which shows that the officers entrusted with the work of administration, the *jagirdars*, the *Faujdars*, the *Karoris*, the *Zamindars*, the *Chaudharis*, the *Qanungos* and the *ryots* were required to note that in the vacancy caused by the transfer of a certain person, the office of the *diwani* and *amini* of the *suba* had been conferred upon the person named in the imperial order. They should, the order says, treat him as vested with full authority in all matters pertaining to his office and revenue and administrative matters should be referred to him for disposal. They should not act in contravention of his orders and instructions.<sup>61</sup>

### Powers and Functions

The *Diwan-i-suba* occupied an important position in the provincial administration and his power and authority extended over the administrative and financial affairs of the province.<sup>62</sup> He was required to investigate into the cases pertaining to administrative and financial affairs and make all endeavours to reclaim and realise State dues. At the same time he was expected to take necessary measures to increase the area under cultivation in order to ensure the prosperity of the *parganas*. The protection and supervision of the treasury was one of his important functions. He was required to see that no money was spent or appropriated without proper sanction for its disbursement. He saw to it that the receipts for the money sent by the *Futadars*, and remitted to the public treasury at the provincial headquarters, were duly delivered to the *Futadars'* agents.<sup>63</sup>

It appears that the *Amils* of the *parganas* were placed under the supervision and control of the *Diwan-i-suba*. According to the author of the *Farhang-i-Kardani*, the *Diwan-i-suba* was required to send the *Amins* and the *Karoris* at the appropriate time and see to it that the work of assessment and collection of land-revenue was taken up and completed within the specified time-limit<sup>64</sup>. He was also required to see that the requisite papers<sup>65</sup> such as the rent rolls of *jama*, daily records of collections and expenses (*roznamcha-i-tahsil* and *jama-o-kharch*) maintained by the *Fwadars* and abstract statements of collections and expenses of the *parganas* along

60. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 28a.

61. *Ibid*, f. 28b.

62. *Ibid*, f. 28b.

63. *Ibid*, f. 28b.

64. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 28b.

65. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, pp. 134, 145.



with *nuskha-i-diwani*<sup>66</sup> were sent by them to the Revenue Ministry in accordance with the regulations. He had to keep himself well-informed about the activities of the *Amils*, so that none of them could be allowed to exact illegal cesses forbidden or remitted by the State. Moreover, he was required to discover the misappropriation made by the *Amils* on the basis of *kaghaz-i-kham* or village papers maintained by the *Patwari* and showing every kind of realisation. Such misappropriations made by the *Amils* were to be recovered. If any *Amil* was found to be guilty of misappropriation or of other misdeeds, the *Diwan* was required to report the matter to the Emperor so that such an *Amil* might be replaced by another.<sup>67</sup> Lastly, he had to maintain about thirty registers in his office and submit the *nuskha-i-diwani* and other papers<sup>68</sup> to the Revenue Ministry. He was required to prepare copies of each of these papers separately and send them to the Revenue Ministry after six months or at the end of the year, according to the prevailing practice in the province. When transferred or removed he was required to furnish copies of all the papers, under his seal, to the newly appointed *Diwan*.<sup>69</sup>

An examination of the list of the papers, maintained in the office of the *Diwan-i-suba*, helps us to understand the extent of the supervisory authority exercised by the *Diwan*. It appears that his jurisdiction extended over all the branches of land-revenue administration, including provincial treasuries, *khalisa*, *jaigr*, *madad-maash* lands, and *zamindaris* subject to land-revenue and *peshkash* or fixed tribute alike. It appears that he exercised some control over the assignment of the *mansabdars* and over the cash salaries paid to the *mansabdars* and soldiers. All the papers relating

66. *Nuskha-i-Diwani* was another name for *mujmalai* or the consolidated statement of accounts prepared in the office of the *Diwan* which showed the details of the income and expenditure of the *khalisa mahals*. The balance, if any, was also noted. The statement was prepared on the basis of the accounts of income and expenditure submitted to the *Diwan's* office by the *Futadars* of the *khalisa mahals* (*Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, f. 35b).

67. *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, ff. 16ab. See Appendix D.

68. *Nigar Nama-i-Mumshi*, p. 135; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 28a. For a complete list of papers maintained in the office of *Diwan-i-suba* see Appendix D.

69. The names of other papers forwarded to the Revenue Ministry are given in the *Farhang-i-Kardani*. They were *tumar* of *jamabandi*, *roznamcha-i-tahsil*, *jama-o-kharch-i-Futadar*, *mujmal-i-parganat* (*Farhang-i-Kardani*, ff. 28a).

- (a) *tumar-i-jamabandi* or *tumar-i-jama* was the rent roll prepared by the *pargana Amin* showing the total *jama* of the *pargana* under both the heads *mal-o-jibat* and *sair jibat* together with details of the old, newly reclaimed and *aima* villages (*Khulasat-us-Siyaq* f. 21b, 23b, 24ab).
- (b) *roznamcha-i-tahsil* or the accounts of the daily receipts (*Khulasat-us-Siyaq* f. 28b).
- (c) *jama-o-kharch-i-Futadar* : the account of the income and expenditure maintained in the office of the *Futadars*.
- (d) *mujmal-i-parganat* or the *mujmal* of the *parganas* ; *mujmal* of a *pargana* was an abstract of the income and expenditure of the *pargana*. It was also known as *jama-o-kharch-i-pargana* (*khulasat-us-Siyaq* f. 29b).



to the confirmation and renewal of *madad-maash* lands were maintained in his office. He also kept a watch over the mints of the province and examined papers relating to the jails in which the persons convicted by the *Diwan's* court were imprisoned. All the officers serving in the *khalisa mahals* sent the copies of records and accounts maintained in their offices and he issued the necessary orders to them<sup>70</sup>. These inferences are corroborated by evidence contained in the *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, according to which administrative and financial affairs, the work of assessment and collection and the supervision of the income and expenditure pertaining to the public treasury were placed under the *Diwan-i-suba*. He transacted the business of the provincial administration in accordance with the *dastur-ul-amal* issued every year by the Emperor<sup>71</sup>.

### Fiscal and Administrative Divisions

For fiscal purposes a province was divided into *sarkars* and *parganas* or *mahals*. A number of villages with more or less similar assessment rates constituted the fiscal unit known as *mahal*, also referred to as *pargana*. The important difference between the two terms lay in the fact that whereas the *pargana* denoted a fiscal-cum-territorial unit comprising a number of villages, the *mahal* in a more special sense signified a purely fiscal unit<sup>72</sup> such as *mahal katra parcha*<sup>73</sup> and *mahal sair balda*.<sup>74</sup>

A *pargana* might include more than one *mahal*,<sup>75</sup> but generally it comprised a single *mahal* and as such the two terms, when used loosely, were interchangeable. A number of *parganas* comprised a *sarkar* and the land-revenue administration of a *sarkar* was placed under the *Diwan-i-sarkar*.

### Administrative Unit

For administrative purposes a province was divided into a number of administrative units known as *faujdaris*, each under a *Faujdar*. In certain regions they were called *chaklas*. A *faujdar* might comprise a *pargana*, a number of *parganas* and in a few cases even a *sarkar*. The *Faujdar* combined in himself the offices of a military commander, and of the executive

70. *Khulasat-us-Siyah*, f. 16b.

71. *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, pp. 244, 245.

72. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, supp., pp. 180, 181, 223.

73. Collections made from the cloth market were shown separately under the head *mahal katra parcha*.

74. A number of taxes, such as tax on sale and purchase of commodities, transit duties etc., collected in a city constituted a separate fiscal unit and were shown under the head *mahal sair balda*.

75. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. p.193.



head of the administrative unit placed under him. He was responsible for maintaining law and order, was associated with the judiciary and the land revenue administration<sup>76</sup> and presided over the proceedings of the court which was attended by the *Qazi* and the *Mufti*.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, it was his special responsibility to collect land-revenue from the *zortatab zamindars*.<sup>78</sup> He was also required to assist the *Amils* in the collection of land-revenue by them<sup>79</sup> whether they served in the *khalisa* or in the *jagir mahals*.<sup>80</sup>

It appears that a *pargana* generally constituted an administrative unit, whether it comprised a *faujdari* or formed only a part of the *faujdari*. The appointment of *pargana* officials such as the, *Qazi*, the *Mufti*, the *Qumingo* and the *Chaudhari* was made by the central government and they were independent of the *Amil*. They received orders direct from the central and the provincial governments and could effectively intervene in case the *Amil* violated the imperial regulations governing the assessment and collection of land-revenue.<sup>81</sup> These facts lead us to assume that the authority of the *Amil*, whether serving in the *khalisa* or in the *jagir mahals*, was in the main confined to the assessment and collection of land-revenue. A study of the evidence about the *jagir and khalisa* territories reveals that the pattern of land-revenue administration in both was more or less the same.

### Diwan-i-sarkar

The office of the *Diwan-i-sarkar* has so far received little attention in the studies made of the revenue administration under the Mughals. Some references in the chronicles and documents suggest that the chief revenue officer of the *sarkar* was known as the *Diwan*. But according to Dr. Saran the *Amal-guzar* was the chief revenue officer of the *sarkar*.<sup>82</sup> The relevant evidence, however, lends little support to the view expressed by Dr. Saran, and seems to suggest that the *Amal-guzar* was an officer at the *pargana*

76. For a detailed discussion see "The *Faujdari* and *Faujdas* under the Mughals, "Medieval India Quarterly, Vol. IV, 1961, pp. 22-35.

77. *Selected Waqai of the Deccan*, p. 79.

78. *Siyag Nama*, p. 68.

79. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 197; *Siyag Nama*, p. 67; *Inshai-Roshan Kalam*, f. 3a.

80. All the *mahals* in a province were earmarked either as *khalisa* or *jagir*. The *khalisa mahals* were those where the land revenue was collected by the *Amils* or *Karoris* (an *Amil* servig in *khalisa* was known as *Karori*) appointed by the *Diwan-i-ala* and the collections were remitted to the government treasury. On the other hand the *jagir mahals* were those which were assigned to the *mansabdars* in lieu of their salaries and they were entitled to collect land-revenue from their assignments known as the *jagirs*. As the holders of *jagirs* they were known as *jagirdars*. They collected the revenue themselves or appointed their own *Amils* to collect it.

81. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 37b, 38a, 41b, 42a, 43 ab; *Nigar Nama-i-Mumsh*, pp. 83, 90, 91, 140.

82. *Provincial Government of the Mughals*, Saran p. 284.



level. We will examine the position and territorial jurisdiction of the *Amil* in greater detail a little later but for the present we can proceed to examine the evidence which indicates that the chief revenue officer of the *sarkar* was known as the *Diwan*. We read in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* that in the fifteenth regnal year of Aurangzeb an order was issued to Shams-ud-Din, the *Diwan* of Sarkar Islam Nagar, to the effect that he should assign some villages to the Raja of Nawa Nagar as *jagir*.<sup>83</sup> Another passage records the appointment of Roshan Zamir as the *Diwan* and *Amin* of Bandar Surat.<sup>84</sup> It appears that the *Diwan-i-suba* issued instructions to the *Diwans* and the *Amins* to affix their signatures at the top and at the end of a letter addressed to the imperial Court.<sup>85</sup> The evidence, quoted above, brings out the following points :

- (1) There were subordinate *Diwans* under the *Diwan-i-suba*.
- (2) There was an officer in the *sarkar* known as the *Diwan* who dealt with such revenue affairs as the assignment of *jagirs*.

The inference drawn from the evidence contained in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* is directly supported and confirmed by the evidence contained in the *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*. It contains a letter of appointment issued to the *Diwan* of Sarkar Sambhal.<sup>86</sup> We read elsewhere in the same authority about the appointment of *Diwans* of a number of *parganas* in a *chalka*<sup>87</sup> in the province of Allahabad. In the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* we find an appointment order which shows that a *Diwan* was placed in charge of a number of *parganas*.<sup>88</sup> These facts when read together with the evidence contained in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* lend strong support to our inference that the chief revenue officer at the *sarkar* level was known as the *Diwan*. It appears that a number of subordinate *Diwans* served under the *Diwan-i-suba* and that the jurisdiction of a subordinate *Diwan* extended over a *sarkar* or over a group of *parganas*.

### Functions and Duties

The functions and duties of the *Diwan-i-sarkar* are given in the *Nigar-Nama-i-Munshi*. His function was supervisory and he was required to keep an eye on the conduct of the officers serving in the *parganas* under his jurisdiction. He was instructed to take proper measures to ensure that no government officer collected more than one-half of the produce from the ryots. He was authorised to transfer an officer working under him provided a charge had been substantiated against him. He was required to see that

83. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, pp. 204, 285.

84. *Ibid*, I, p. 234.

85. *Ibid*, I, p. 374.

86. *Nigar-Nama-i-Munshi*, f. 121b.

87. *Ibid*, ff. 97ab.

88. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 18ab.



the *Karoris* and the *Futadars* did not misappropriate any government dues. If the audit of the accounts revealed some misappropriation made by an officer he had to be summoned by the *Diwan* and asked to submit an explanation of the alleged misappropriation. Moreover, as a precautionary measure against possible misappropriation by the *Amils*, the *Diwan* obtained an undertaking from the *Qanungos* and the *Chaudharis* to the effect that they would report any act of misappropriation to the *Diwan*.<sup>89</sup>

The head of the land revenue administration in a *pargana* was the *Amil* or the *Amal-guzar*. Dr. Saran's account of the *pargana* officers, however, lands us into a controversy as to the administrative jurisdiction of the *Amal-guzar* or the *Amil*. His statements deserve to be quoted.

"The chief revenue officer of the *sarkar* was the *Amil* or *Amalguzar*. He was assisted by numerous staff of which the *Bitikchi* was the most important."<sup>90</sup> Again we read in the next paragraph.

"In the *pargana*, the *Shiqdar*, the *Amil* and the *Karkun* and *Fotahdar* had continued from Sher Shah's time. While the main work of assessment and realisation was carried on by the *Amil* with the help of his *Karkuns*, and the rest of these staff and semi-official functionaries, the *Qanungo*, the *Patwari* and the headman, the *Shiqdar* also seems to have given him his substantial help."<sup>91</sup> An examination of the above account brings out the following points :

- (1) The *Amal-guzar*, also known as the *Amil*, was the chief revenue officer of a *sarkar*.
- (2) The main work of assessment and collection in a *pargana* was carried on by the *Amil*.

The account is not very clear and specific. It suggests that the designation of the chief revenue officers in the *parganas* and the *sarkar* was the same, but they differed in their territorial jurisdiction and the *pargana Amil* was probably regarded as a subordinate to the *sarkar Amil*. However, the *pargana Amil* is not included among the subordinate officers under the *Amal-guzar* or the *Amil* of the *sarkar* who are named *Bitikchi*, *Karkun*, *Futadar* or *Khizanadar*. Nevertheless, the inference made by Dr. Saran is quite obvious : that the *Amil* or the *Amal-guzar* was the head of the land revenue administration in a *sarkar*.

Dr. Ishtiaq Husain Qureshy has examined the question in some detail in an article entitled "The *Pargana* Officials under Akbar<sup>92</sup>." He has identified the *Amil* with the *Amal-guzar* and shown that the *Amal-guzar* was

89. *Nigar-Nama-i-Mumabi*, ff. 97ab, 121ab-123ab ; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 17b, 18ab.

90. *Provincial Government of the Mughals*, Saran p. 284.

91. *Ibid.*, p. 284.

92. *Islamic Culture*, Vol. XVI, 1942, pp. 87-99.



the head of the *pargana* administration. His main arguments may be summed up as follows :

- (1) The duties assigned to him show that he was connected directly with the peasants and headmen of the villages. Such an officer could not be in-charge of such a large unit as a *sarkar*.
- (2) He was the supervisor of the surveying staff. It seems impossible that there should be a unit of surveying staff for the entire *sarkar*, since the method of assessment demanded frequent and extensive measurement of land under cultivation.
- (3) He also supervised the working of the treasury and the description of the treasury in the *Ain* shows that it was a *pargana* treasury.

The arguments advanced by Dr. Qureshi have considerable weight. Nevertheless, they are based on circumstantial evidence. Fortunately more definite evidence is available on this point. It indicates clearly that the *Amil* or *Karori* was the head of the land-revenue administration in the *pargana*. For example, the *Amil* of *pargana Dhauliqah* complained against Sher Khan, the *Faujdar* of Sorath, since the latter had carried away cattle from the villages under the jurisdiction of the said *Amil*.<sup>93</sup> Abdur Rahman, the *Karori* of *Paragna Patan Dev*, was transferred as the ryots made a complaint against him.<sup>94</sup> In other sources also the *Amil* is described as the *pargana* officer. In the *Iqbal Nama-i-Jahangir*, Muhammad Saeed is mentioned as the *Amil* of *Pargana Jalandhar*.<sup>95</sup> We hear about the appointment of a *Karori* in *pargana Jalor*.<sup>96</sup> We find in *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi* that Muhammad Hashim, the *Amil* and the *Karori* of *Pargana Darwen*, was removed from his office.<sup>97</sup> In *Farhang-i-Kardani* the *Karori* is explicitly described as a *pargana* officer and his functions and duties are enumerated.<sup>98</sup> This leads us to conclude that the *Amil* or the *Amalguzar* was the head of the *pargana* administration.

The inference is also corroborated by the evidence contained in the *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*. According to the author of the *Khulasat-us-Siyaq* the *Amil* or *Amalguzar* was the head of the local administration at the *pargana* level. In the eighteenth regnal year of Akbar the *jama* of every mahal was assessed and an *Amil* was entrusted with the collection of the revenue amounting to one *krone* of *dam*.<sup>99</sup> In the beginning the office of the *Karori* combined the functions of the executive officer of the *pargana* with the work of collection.

93. *Mirat-i-Abmadi*, I, p. 329.

94. *Ibid*, I, p. 305.

95. *Iqbal Nama*, pp. 179, 180.

96. *Waqai-i-Suba-i-Ajmer*, p. 84.

97. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, ff. 33, 34a.

98. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 29ab.

99. *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, ff. 25b, 26ab; *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 87.



In the reign of Shahjahan certain organisational changes were introduced and the office of the *pargana Amin* was instituted for the first time. Islam Khan, the *Diwan-i-ala* (13th to 19th year) appointed an *Amin* in every *mahal* to assess *jama* and he stayed in the *mahal* for the whole year. The office of *faujdari* and the work of collection of land-revenue was entrusted to the *Karori*. The respective position and functions of the *Amin* and the *Karori* were specified under the next *Wazir* Saadullah Khan (20th year). He organised a number of *parganas* into a *chakla* and established the office of the *Amin* and the *Faujdar* in a *chakla* which were held by the same person. The *Karori* who remained the *pargana* officer was required to collect government revenue and was allowed a commission of 5% as collection perquisites. Thus the *Karori* of the *mahal* was relegated to a subordinate position and was required to get the necessary orders from the *Amin* and the *Faujdar*.<sup>100</sup>

The offices of the *Amil* and *Amin* were thus quite distinct from each other and each had its own well-defined functions. Generally, two different persons were appointed to the two offices, but there was no rigidity in the practice and the two offices were sometimes held by the same person. Similarly, a *Faujdar* could hold the office of the *Amil* or the *Amin*. In 1108 A.H./1696 A.D. Sayyid Mohsin was appointed *Amil* and *Amin* of *Pargana Dhauliqah* in Gujrat. In 1109 A.H./1697 Muhammad Baqar was appointed the *Faujdar* and the *Amil* of the same *pargana* and at an earlier date Amanat Khan was entrusted with the offices of *amini* and *fajudari* of *Pargana Patan Dev*.<sup>101</sup>

The account of the *Amil's* functions and duties as given in the *Ain* cannot hold good for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in view of the fact that under Akbar the *Amil* was the head of the entire *pargana* administration combining in himself the offices of the *Amin*, *Faujdar* and *Amin*. Important changes were introduced in the reign of Shahjahan and the *Amil* was relegated to a subordinate position under the *Amin* and the *Faujdar*. He was entrusted with the work of the collection of land-revenue and other matters directly connected with it.

### Functions

The primary function<sup>102</sup> of the *Amil* was to ensure the cultivation of all cultivable land and to collect the assessed land-revenue on the cultivated land. He was required to see, we are told in the *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, that the total area entered into under the *nasaq* agreement was brought under cultivation

100. *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, ff. 25b, 26ab.

101. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, pp. 291, 292, 330, 334.

102. The account is based on the following evidence: *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, f. 29a; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 62b, 63ab; *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, ff. 25b, 26ab; *Nigar Nama-i-Mumshi*, pp. 136, 137.



and that no decrease in the area under cultivation was allowed. He appointed a *Tappadar* in every *tappa* who was required to stay in the *tappa* and keep in close touch with every village and every cultivator so that no arable land in any village might be left fallow and the cultivator might not migrate elsewhere. In order to ensure the cultivation of arable land, he was enjoined to request the *Amin* to grant loan for agricultural purposes to the poor and needy cultivators. He was, then, required to take the necessary measures for the collection of land-revenue. He appointed certain horsemen and footmen for keeping watch over them so that the cultivators might not evade the payment of land-revenue. He was required to collect the land-revenue within the fixed period on the basis of *tumar-i-jamabandi* or the paper showing the assessed land-revenue, prepared by the *Amin*, and remit the collections in the treasury.

Secondly, he was responsible jointly with the *Amin* and the *Futadar*, for the safe custody of the money deposited in the local treasury. He locked the treasury under his own seal and that of the *Amin* and exercised the utmost vigilance over it. He was, however, not entitled to spend a single *dam* without the prior sanction of the *Diwan*.

Thirdly, he settled the remuneration of the semi-officials such as the *Chaudhari*, the *Qanungo* and the *Mugaddam*. At the end of the year, provided that the total collections had been made, he adjusted the claims of these officials for their perquisites known as *nankar*, *rusum* and *inam*. He himself was entitled to a commission of 5% on the total collections.<sup>103</sup>

Lastly, he was responsible for the maintenance and despatch of a number of registers to the Court. These registers were sent at the end of every season. He was also required to submit an abstract of the total income and expenditure for the entire year.<sup>104</sup>

### Audit of the *Amil's* accounts

The accounts of collections maintained by the office of the *Amil* were duly audited. In case it was discovered that he had made any collections in excess of the assessed land-revenue and other sanctioned taxes, the total amount of such collections was calculated and it was realised from him. This practice was known as *bar-amad* or *bar-amad-i-amilan*. Such unauthorised collections were regarded as State dues and the *Amil* was accountable for them.<sup>105</sup> The practice can be traced back to the reign of Shahjahan and most probably it continued till the reign of Muhammad Shah. Pre-

103. *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, ff. 25b, 26ab; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 209; *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, pp. 136, 137; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 62b, 63ab.

104. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 29 ab; according to the *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, the total number of registers maintained by the *Amil* were twelve. See *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, f. 26 ab.

105. *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, ff. 43ab; *Siyag Nama*, pp. 75-82.



viously no such realisations had been made from the *Amil*. During the reign of Shahjahan, Rai Rayan Jaswant Rai, the *Peshkar* of the *Diwan-i-ala*, obtained the *kaghaz-i-kham*<sup>106</sup> of the *Patwaris* and translated them into Persian. It was revealed that the *Karoris* had misappropriated large sums. Since then it was laid down that the *tumar-i-bar-amad* showing the State demand against the *Amil* should be prepared on the basis of *kaghaz-i-kham* maintained by the *Patwari*. The amounts were to be realised from the *Karori*, the *Futahdar* and others who had made the collections in excess of the *mal-o-jihat*. Two officers, the *Darogha*<sup>107</sup> and the accountant were appointed in every *mahal* to implement the regulations. The newly created office of the *Bar-amad Nawis* was meant for translating the *kaghaz-i-kham* of the *Patwari* and for preparing the *tumar-i-bar-amad*<sup>108</sup> or account showing the amount due against the *Amil*.

### *Bar-amad Nawis*

The new office of the *Bar-amad Nawis* continued to function till the reign of Muhammad Shah.<sup>109</sup> It appears that a *Bar-amad Nawis* was appointed in every *pargana*. He examined the papers maintained by the *Patwari* and prepared the *tumar-i-baramad* showing the amount to be realised from the *Amil*. He was helped in preparing the *tumar* by the *Chaudharis*, the *Qanungos* and the *zamindars*. They were instructed to furnish the papers maintained by the *Patwari* to the *Bar-amad Nawis* while the *Patwari* was required to assist the *Bar-amad Nawis*. The *tumar* was sent to the Revenue Ministry and the auditors in the Ministry calculated the amount to be realised from the *Amil*.<sup>110</sup>

### *Amin*

Under Akbar the *Amin* has been mentioned as one of the important provincial officers like the *Diwan*, the *Bakhshi* and the *Sadr*. Gujarat for example had an *Amin*.<sup>111</sup> Later it became a well-established practice to appoint an *Amin* in each of the provinces.<sup>112</sup> Sometimes, however,

106. The literal meaning of the term is original papers ; technically it meant the papers maintained by the *Patwari*. It showed along with other entries all the realisations made by the *Amils* in the local language.

107. A general term for an officer who co-ordinated or supervised the working of a department.

108. *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, ff. 43b, 44a.

109. The inference is based on the fact that the functions and duties of the *Bar Amad Nawis* are given in the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 18.

110. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, ff. 104ab ; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, p. 15 ab.

111. *Akbar Nama*, III pp. 266, 403, 601.

112. *Ibid*, III, pp. 166, 266, 403, *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, ff. 26b, 27a.



the offices of the *Amin* and the *Diwan* were held by the same person.<sup>113</sup> The details of the functions and duties of the provincial *Amin* do not find a place in the *Ain-i-Akbari*. However, a stray reference in the *Ain-i-Amalguzar* suggests that the *Amin* was sent to verify the report of the *Amil* stating the extent of damages done to the crops by natural calamity<sup>114</sup>. The evidence in the *Akbar Nama* and in the *Ain-i-Akbari* is corroborated by the evidence available in the *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, a work compiled in the reign of Aurangzeb. It says that in the reign of Akbar an *Amin* was appointed in every province. In case any of the *mahals* suffered from a natural calamity the said *Amin* visited the *mahal* at the request of the *Amil*. In consultation with him and with his agreement the *Amin* allowed the necessary remission for the damage done to the crops as a result of natural calamity. After the completion of the work assigned to him he returned to his headquarters. The practice continued for a long time, but in the reign of Shah-jahan, Islam Khan the *Diwan-i-ala*, appointed an *Amin* in every *mahal* and he was entrusted with the work of assessing *jama*.<sup>115</sup>

### The Pargana Amin

The *Pargana Amin* occupied the position of an adjudicator between the king and the ryots. He was required to see that the State dues were realised from the ryots, and that they were not subjected to injustice or oppression. He was required to see that one-half of the produce was realised for the State and the other half was completely left with the ryots. His primary function was to find out and locate all the land under cultivation and assess it according to rules and regulations. He had special instructions to see that no cultivated land remained concealed from him and thereby misappropriated by fraudulent and dishonest persons. He compared the assessment figures for the previous ten years on the basis of *muwazina-i-dah sala*, inspected each field under cultivation and assessed *jama* within the period specified for assessment.<sup>116</sup> When the assessment for the entire *pargana* had been completed he prepared the *tumar-i-jamabandi*, bearing the signatures of the *Chaudharis*, the *Qanungos* and the *Qazi*. He also obtained an undertaking from the *Karori* to the effect that the latter would be accountable for the total collections of the assessed *jama*.<sup>117</sup> The *Amin* issued the *patta* (lease-deed) and obtained *qabuliat* (deed of acceptance) from them. He maintained about sixteen registers furnishing complete information about the agrarian conditions in the *pargana* and was required to send the assess-

113. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, pp. 291, 292, 330, 334.

114. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 199.

115. *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, ff. 25b, 26ab.

116. *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, ff. 17b, 18a; cf. *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, ff. 27b, 28ab; *Nigar Nama-i Munshi*, p. 136; *Farhang-i-Kardani* f. 28a.

117. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 29; *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, ff. 27b, 28ab.



ment paper and other papers maintained in his office to the Revenue Ministry. He was also associated with the management of the treasury, and along with other officers was jointly responsible for the safe custody of the cash in the treasury.<sup>118</sup> Finally, he kept a watch over the *Karoris*, the *Chaudharies*, the *Qanungos* and the *zamindars* and saw to it that they did not realise any of the taxes forbidden by the Emperor.<sup>119</sup> Thus he also exercised some supervisory authority over the *pargana* officials.

### The *Karkun*

The *Karkun* was an important officer in the land-revenue administration of a *pargana*. Under Akbar he served as a sub-ordinate officer under *Amil* and was associated with the work of assessment, collection of land-revenue and safe custody and proper disbursement of money in the *pargana* treasury. The *Amil* of the *khalisa* was served by two *Bitikchis*, the *Karkun* and the *Khas Nawis*.<sup>120</sup> About his functions and duties we find some astray references in the *Ain-i-Amalguzar* and *Ain-i-Khizanadar*. It appears that the *Karkun* recorded the *zabt* operations independently along with the *Patwari*. The *Amil* compared the two records and put his seal on the record of the *zabt* operation noted by the *Karkun*. A copy of the record was handed over to the *Karkun*.<sup>121</sup> He had also to attest the *muntakhab*<sup>122</sup> of a village after the *zabt* operations had been completed which was despatched to the Court every week. His next important function was to keep a watch over the collections and he maintained a ledger showing the daily receipts. Such a ledger was simultaneously maintained by the *Amil* and the *Khizanadar* also.<sup>123</sup> Lastly, he was associated, along with other officials, with the safe custody of money deposited in the treasury and its disbursement in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Revenue Ministry. The *Khizanadar* was instructed to keep the money received by him at a proper place known to the *Karkun* and to compare his own ledger of receipts with that of the *Karkun*. Generally, the *Khizanadar* was not authorised to disburse any money from the treasury without the prior sanction of the *Diwan*. However, in case of an emergency the *Karkun* and the *Shiqdar* could give the necessary sanction for disbursement which was to be duly reported to the Court.<sup>124</sup>

118. *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, ff. 17, 18.

119. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, p. 136.

120. *Ain-i-Akbari*, III, p. 381.

121. *Ibid*, I, p. 199.

122. An abstract of the village account showing in one view the fields situated in different parts of the village owned or cultivated by one individual; an abridged form of *muntakhab-i-khasra* showing the *jama* of the village together with the area under cultivation.

123. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 199.

124. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 201.



The *Karkun* continued to occupy the same position in the land-revenue administration of the *pargana* in the seventeenth and the first-half of the eighteenth century. He was associated with the work of assessment, collection of land-revenue and the safe custody and proper disbursement of the money deposited in the *pargana* treasury.<sup>125</sup> He had to maintain certain papers and despatch them to the higher authorities at the end of every season. Moreover, he had to send the progress report of collections every week and the statement of income and expenditure every fortnight.<sup>126</sup>

### The *Pargana* Treasury

Each *pargana* had its own treasury and was administered by a number of officials headed by the *Khizanadar*, commonly known as *Futadar*. Under Akbar, the *Amil*, the *Karkun* and the *Shiqdar* were associated with the management of treasury and were jointly responsible for the safe custody and proper disbursement of the cash deposits in the *pargana* treasury. Later on, it appears, the posts of *Darogha-i-khizana* and *Mushrif* were added to the treasury staff.

### *Khizanadar*

Under Akbar the *Khizanadar* or treasurer was generally known as *Futahdar*. His functions included the collection of revenue, safe custody of cash receipts, maintenance of accounts and proper disbursement of cash deposits in the treasury. He was required to accept all kinds of coins, gold, silver and copper, brought by the cultivators. He was specifically enjoined not to demand any particular coin. He could not demand rebate on the august coin of the Emperor and realise only the equivalent of the deficiency in coin weight. He was required to deposit the cash at a suitable place after apprising the *Karkun* and the *Shiqdar*, and to count it every evening. He prepared a memorandum, got it signed by the *Amal-guzar*, compared the ledger of the receipts with that of the *Karkun* and authenticated it with his own signature. When the *Amil* had put his seal on the door of the treasury, the *Khizanadar* placed a lock of his own and opened it only after due intimation to the *Amil* and the *Karkun*. He was required to collect money from the cultivators and give receipts for it. In order to remove any discrepancy the *Khizanadar* was required to obtain the signature of the *Patwari* on the account prepared by him. With regard to the disbursement of cash deposits in the treasury the regulations laid down that the *Khizanadar* was not authorised to disburse any money for any purpose, whatsoever, without the prior sanction of the *Diwan*. In case an emergency arose and the

125. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 11b, 12a; *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, f. 104.

126. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 11b, 12a.



expenditure could not be deferred, the money could be disbursed by obtaining the written permission of the *Karkun* and the *Shiqdar*. However, the matter was to be duly reported to the higher authorities.<sup>127</sup>

The functions and duties of the *Khizanadar* continued to be the same in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>128</sup> It appears that in the first half of the eighteenth century the *Futadar* was entitled to certain perquisites, known as *rusum-i-futadari*. He was authorised to appropriate five-sixths of the collection made under the head *rusum* and the balance of one-sixth was kept in his custody for necessary adjustments when his accounts were audited.<sup>129</sup>

### *Darogha-i-Khizana*

The *Darogha-i-Khizana* is not mentioned in the *Ain*, but later documents contain references to the office of the *Darogha-i-Khizana*. Letters of appointment enumerate the functions and duties of the *Darogha* and show that he held an important position in the department of the *pargana* treasury. His main function was to supervise and co-ordinate the working of the *pargana* treasury. He was responsible for the safe custody of the daily collections made at the *pargana* treasury and to verify the cash in accordance with the entries made in the accounts maintained by the *Karkun*, the accountant and the *Futadar*. The cash was to be locked in the treasurer's room under his own seal, and it was to be opened with the joint consent of the various officers associated with the management of the treasury. The *Darogha-i-Khizana* along with the other officers kept a watch over the disbursement of money and saw to it that the *Futadar* did not misappropriate a single *dam* and did not disburse any money without the proper sanction of the *Diwan*. He was required to take the necessary measures to ensure the prompt payment of the salaries to the soldiers. Finally he had to keep with him a copy of the ledger showing receipts and cash deposits in the treasury.<sup>130</sup>

## Section III

### Hereditary Offices of the *Qanungo* and the *Chaudhari*

The well-established practice of the Mughal government to transfer the *jagirdars* was hardly conducive to stability of the land-revenue administration or to continuity in the maintenance of local records. It was not

127. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 201.

128. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, pp. 100, 103, *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 12b, 13ab.

129. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 13ab.

130. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 25a.



possible for a revenue officer to perform the functions of his office with any degree of success in the absence of complete records, showing the interests of various parties in land, the usage, laws and customs regarding revenue arrangements and the rates and modes of assessment. The consequent confusion in the local administration can be easily visualised. However, the hereditary officials, the *Qanungo* and the *Chaudhari*, filled the vacuum caused by the frequent transfer of *jagirdars* and of revenue officers. The *Qanungos* maintained complete record of the various claims and titles to land, of local customs and practices about the rates and modes of assessment and also of the *zamindar* families for the collection of land-revenue. Similar records were also maintained by the *Chaudharis*.<sup>131</sup>

### *Qanungo*

It appears that the *Qanungos*, at least in some provinces, were appointed at three different administrative levels, namely the *suba*<sup>132</sup>, the *sarkar*<sup>133</sup> and the *pargana*.<sup>134</sup> Whereas the provincial *Qanungo* attested the accounts prepared by the *Diwan* for submission to the Revenue Ministry,<sup>135</sup> the *sarkar Qanungo* collected the revenue papers such as *muwazina*, *dastur-ul-amal*,<sup>136</sup> the list of villages and other explanatory notes from the *pargana Qanungos*, attested them with his signature and forwarded them to the Revenue Ministry.<sup>137</sup> The *Qanungo* of a *sarkar* also exercised some supervisory authority over the conduct and actions of the *pargana Qanungos*.<sup>138</sup>

### The *Pargana Qanungo*

The *Qanungos* at the provincial and *sarkar* level do not seem to have maintained their own records. They seem to have been mainly concerned with collection and transmission of the records maintained by the *pargana Qanungos*. However, it was at the *pargana* level that the *Qanungo* maintained his own records and appears to have been an important official of the local land-revenue administration. Generally, there was one *Qanungo* in a *pargana*, but in certain *parganas* there could be more than one *Qanungo*.<sup>139</sup>

131. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, f. 8a.

132. *Riyaz-us-Salat*, pp. 350, 352.

133. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, p. 76, *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 43ab, 44a.

134. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 209, *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, ff. 104, 105, *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 43b, 44a.

135. *Riyaz-us-Salat*, pp. 350, 351.

136. The record of local laws and regulations regarding the revenue and of the rates and modes of assessment.

137. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 43b, 44ab.

138. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 43b, 44ab.

139. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 263; *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, f. 104; *Studies in the Land Revenue History of Bengal*, pp. 166, 167.



## Functions

The most important function of the *Qanungo* was to maintain a complete record of the various interests in land and of the usages and regulations respecting the rates and modes of assessment. He maintained a number of registers which provided complete information about the agrarian conditions in the *pargana*. The records<sup>140</sup> maintained were *taqsim* or *muwazina dah sala*, *dastur-ul-amal* or the cash rates, list of villages, *jamadami* figures and records about the *aima*<sup>141</sup> lands specifying the nature of the grant (whether granted by virtue of a *farman* or by the order of the local officer).

The *Qanungo* also obtained and maintained copies of accounts and papers of revenue collections such as copies of the engagement of the *zamindars* or farmers for revenue settlement.<sup>142</sup> The next important function of the *Qanungo* was to record the various interests in land and note any changes and alterations effected on account of sales, mortgages or free gifts.<sup>143</sup> When the sale-deed of a *zamindari* was executed the *Qanungo* was duly informed and it was specifically stated in the sale deed that the transaction was executed with the cognisance of the *pargana Qanungo*.<sup>144</sup>

Moreover, the *Qanungo* was associated with the work of assessment. Having satisfied himself that the assessment was just and equitable, he along with the *Chaudhari* attested the *daul* or estimated *jama* and certified that the assessment had been made in consultation with them and that no injustice had been done to the ryots.

## Emoluments and Allowances

In the early years of Akbar's reign the *Qanungo* was entitled to half of the collections made under the head of *sad-doi* of the *Patwari* or two per cent of commission paid to the *Patwari*. The other half went to the *Patwari*. Later on, however, Akbar discontinued the practice and the *Qanungo* received a fixed salary for services rendered to the State.<sup>145</sup> The payment was not made in cash, but lands yielding an estimated income equal to their salaries were assigned to them. Subsequent evidence relating to the first half of the eighteenth century, however, indicates that the practice of

140. The list of papers given above is based on the following authorities ; *Ain-i-Akbari* I, p. 200, *Zawabit-i-Alamgiri* f. 8a ; *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, ff. 104, 105. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 43b, 44ab ; *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, ff. 63b, 64ab; also see *Studies in the Land Revenue History of Bengal*, p. 187.

141. *Aima* lands : lands assigned as *madad maash* were also known as *aima* lands.

142. *Studies in the Land Revenue History of Bengal*, p. 165.

143. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi Ali Khan*, 66a; *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 224, 225, 228, 229 ; *Studies in the Land Revenue History of Bengal*, pp. 164, 165.

144. *Allahabad Documents* No. 229, cf. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi Ali Khan*, f. 6a.

145. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 209.



assigning lands to the *Qanungo* was abandoned and they were paid in the form of commission collected from the ryots. The *Qanungo* was entitled to collect 2% from the share of the ryots and this commission was known as *rusum*.<sup>146</sup>

### The Chaudhari

Literally, the word "*Chaudhari*" signifies a holder of four (shares or profits) as well as the headman of a village. It also denoted a holder of landed property classed with the *zamindars* and *taalluqadars*.<sup>147</sup> The *Chaudhari* was an important official at the *pargana* level and was associated with the local land-revenue administration in more ways than one. The office of the *Chaudhari* appears to have been hereditary.<sup>148</sup> Generally, the office of the *pargana Chaudhari* was held by one person<sup>149</sup>, but there was no uniform practice. There is evidence to show that there were sometimes more than one *Chaudhari* in a *pargana*.<sup>150</sup>

### Functions

The *Chaudhari* was associated with the work of assessment and collection of land-revenue. He accompanied the *Amin* when the latter visited the village for the annual or periodical assessment and was consulted by the *Amin*.<sup>151</sup> He put his signature on the *jamabandi* along with the *Qanungo* and certified that the land-revenue demand for the *pargana* had been assessed in consultation with him, the *Qanungo* and the *Muqaddams* and had been accepted by them.<sup>152</sup> The *Chaudhari* was also associated with the work of collection and gave an undertaking along with the *Qanungos* and the *Muqaddams* of the *pargana* that the assessed amount for the *pargana* would be deposited in the treasury through the *Karcari*.<sup>153</sup>

The *Chaudhari* attested certain revenue papers such as the rent-roll and *tumari-i-afat* or statement showing details of the damage done to crops.<sup>154</sup> He also maintained records giving details about the agrarian conditions

146. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 43b, 44ab.

147. *Wilson's Glossary*, p. 105; *Chaudhari* was also known as *Patel* and in the Deccan he was called *Desb Mukh* (*Malumat-ul-Afaq*, f. 174).

148. *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 299, 328; In these documents the *Chaudhari* appears to be a family name and indicates the hereditary nature of the office. Moreover, the practice of the grant of *nankar* land to the *Chaudhari* leads to the same inference.

149. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 47b, 43ab., 43a.

150. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 263; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 29a.

151. *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, f. 27b.

152. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 34a.

153. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, f. 8a.

154. *Farhang-i-Kardani* f. 36a.



in the *pargana* and the record of various interests in land. He furnished some records to the *Karori* such as the *muwazina-i-dah sala*, list of villages, records showing rent-free grants and the *dastur-ul-amal*.<sup>155</sup>

The *Chaudhari* was required to make every effort for the extension of cultivation. Moreover, he was enjoined to cooperate with the government officers when they were engaged in chastising and suppressing unruly and rebellious elements in the villages under his jurisdiction.<sup>156</sup>

### Allowances or Perguisites

For the services rendered to the State the *Chaudhari* was granted rent-free land. Jahangir granted rent-free lands to each of the *Chaudharis* appointed by him in the Panjab. He describes the grant as *madad-maash* or subsistence allowance.<sup>157</sup> Later documents indicate that the grant of such rent-free lands as subsistence allowance continued. However, it was not described as *madad-maash* but came to be known as *nankar*. There are some references to the *nankar* land granted to the *Chaudharis*.<sup>158</sup> The grant of *nankar* land was made by the State, but the *Chaudhari* was also sometimes paid by the ryots. He was entitled to collect the fixed commission of one percent from the share of the ryots, and was enjoined not to collect or expect anything more.<sup>159</sup> Unless the *rusum* of one percent collected from the ryots is identified with the grant of *nankar* land, the available evidence suggests that the *Chaudhari* was regarded as the servant of the State as well as the representatives of the agricultural community and that he was paid for his services by both.

### Section III

and *ijara*

### IJARA OR REVENUE-FARMING

The practice of *ijara* or revenue-farming on a fairly large scale, especially in the *khalisa* lands, constitutes an important development in the first-half of the eighteenth century. It appears that it had been a common practice with the *jagirdars*, whenever it suited their needs, to farm out the revenues of their *jagirs* to a banker or any other person commanding considerable local influence to collect the revenues successfully. But the revenue-farming in the *khalisa* lands was generally disapproved by the Mughal

155. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri*, f. 8a.

156. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 63b, 64a.

157. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, p. 32.

158. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 45ab, 47a; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, ff. 29b, 30a.

159. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 41b, 42.



emperors and on the whole the practice was very limited. However, the relevant evidence on record indicates that revenue farming of the *khalisa* lands became very common in the first-half of the eighteenth century, especially after the death of Bahadur Shah, and as the century wore on the practice became the most dominant feature of the land-revenue system of the Mughal Empire. It was accompanied by certain developments which had already begun in the closing years of the seventeenth century. Whereas the practice gave rise to a new class of intermediaries as the collecting agency for the land-revenue, it adversely affected the interests of hereditary intermediaries, known as the *zamindars*, and of all those who had some claim or title to the land.

### Nature of the Administrative Arrangement

The practice of *ijara* has been defined in some detail in a revenue glossary compiled in the later half of the eighteenth century. It appears that *ijara* constituted a sort of contract and implied the farming out of the revenues of a *mahal* or more than one *mahal*. The *ijarahdar* was required to pay the fixed amount as stipulated in the agreement without any reference to increase or decrease in the collections. He remitted the stipulated amount in instalments as agreed between the parties, and was not entitled to make any representation for reduction in the amount to be paid. However, if certain conditions were stipulated in the agreement he was entitled to make a representation.<sup>160</sup> One form of *ijara* was known as *rasad afzud*. Such an arrangement was made for a village for which the *jama* had decreased on account of natural calamities, and it implied an agreement on the part of the *ijarahdar* for the collection and payment of a sum lower than the original *jama* in the first instance. The agreement, however, stipulated an annual increase in the amount to be paid by the *ijarahdar* till it reached the original *jama*.<sup>161</sup> Yet another form of *ijara* was *mutaahidi*. The main difference between *ijara* and *mutaahidi* lay in the fact that the former agreement was generally made without any conditions except the payment of the full amount as agreed upon between the parties. The latter practice, on the other hand, implied the agreement to collect the assessed revenue from the *zamindars* of the *pargana* and remit the same to the treasury. It appears that a person who entered into a *mutaahidi* agreement was entitled to deductions in case the crops were damaged on account of natural calamities provided the government was convinced of the genuineness of the representation. On the other hand, he was required to apprise the government officer concerned of any increase in the revenues of the *parganas*. Finally, the im-

160. Add. 6603, f. 48b.

161. Ibid, 6603, f. 48b.



portant difference between the *ijarahdar* and *mutaahhid* was that the latter was treated as a government servant.<sup>162</sup>

Thus in its nature the *ijara* arrangement implied the right of collecting land-revenue on behalf of the State or the *jagirdar* for a fixed period and paying a fixed amount to the *jagirdar* or the government officer as stipulated in the agreement. An *ijarahdar* was an intermediary for collecting land-revenue; however, he acquired no proprietary right in land and in this he differed from the *zamindar* as an intermediary. It has not been specifically stated in the Mughal revenue literature what was the share of the *ijarahdar* in the land-revenue or how he was compensated for the risk and trouble taken by him. The evidence on record suggests that the amount payable by the *ijarahdar* was fixed as a lump sum and the nature of the arrangement indicates that the transaction involved bargaining between the parties. We can also assume that the settlement was made for an amount a little less than the expected income from the *mahal* farmed out to the *ijarahdar*, thus leaving a margin for him. We can visualise that an efficient *ijarahdar* could discover and assess the land under cultivation which was not disclosed when a detailed assessment had been made and therefore not included in the *jama*. His vigilance and personal efforts could increase his collection beyond the estimated *jama* and the agreement laid down that the government could make no claim with regard to the increase in the collections. The *ijarahdar's* source of income lay in finding out and assessing newly reclaimed lands and in the collections made under such heads of taxation as *bala-dasti*.<sup>163</sup> These could be his legitimate source of income. Moreover, he enjoyed the right to assess the land under cultivation on the basis of measurement and prepare a new *jama*.<sup>164</sup> In case he had recourse to such a practice his net income or profit increased considerably. But such a practice implied an assessment which was heavy for the *zamindars* and peasants and tended to ruin cultivation and the peasantry. Thus it appears that the *ijara* was not a sound revenue arrangement. It tended to enrich the *ijarahdar* at the cost of the peasants and *zamindars*. In case the *ijarahdar's* exactions ruined cultivation and the peasants, it meant a progressive decline in the revenues of the government. An examination of the relevant evidence, which follows, will substantially confirm the points made in the above lines.

The *ijara* was a well-known practice in the land-revenue administration under the Sultans of Delhi but it fell into disrepute under Sher Shah and Akbar. It was revived again during the reign of Jahangir<sup>165</sup>, and became quite widespread in the course of the seventeenth century. We know

162. *Risalah-i-Ziraat*, f. 13b-18a.

163. *bala-dasti* denoted a fine (*Risalah-i-Ziraat* f. 13b).

164. *Risalah-i-Ziraat*, f. 13ab.

165. *Nisban* No. 3 (Jaipur Archives); J. Xavier tr. Hosten J.A.S.B.N.S. XXII, 1927-  
p. 121.



that certain *mahals* in Bengal were obtained by the Portuguese on *ijara* in the reign of Shahjahan.<sup>166</sup> Sadiq Khan's account makes it clear that in the reign of Shahjahan the practice of *ijara* was widespread and in fact brought ruin to large parts of the Empire.<sup>167</sup> The inference is indirectly confirmed by a *farman* issued to Rasik Das Karori in the 8th regnal year of Aurangzeb. It contains a number of instructions for preparing the revenue records; one of these enjoins the local administration to note the number of revenue-farmers and cultivators in every village.<sup>168</sup> This leads to the inference that the *ijaraahdars* were to be found in every *pargana*, if not in every village of the Empire. The *farman* also reveals that it was the first general statement of the land-revenue policy of the Emperor after his accession. The conditions and practices mentioned in the *farman* do not relate particularly to the reign of Aurangzeb and can best be understood as the administrative legacy of the former reign. Thus the widespread practice suggested by evidence contained in the *farman* was not a new development but a practice which was inherited from the reign of Shahjahan.

For the remaining years of Aurangzeb's reign the evidence on the subject is somewhat conflicting. On the one hand, we find, during that period, the attempt to do away with the practice or at least to curtail it to a degree which could not affect the working of the land-revenue administration to any appreciable extent. On the other hand, there are indications that the practice continued in spite of standing orders to the contrary. The first order which prohibits the practice of *ijara* in the *khalisa* and *jagir* lands was issued in the 1087 A.H./1676 A.D. is available in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*. It appears that the practice of farming out land to the *Chaudharis* and the *Muqaddams*, in the province of Ahmadabad, was reported to the Emperor. It was pointed out in the report that the practice led to a lot of injustice and caused oppression of the ryots. The Emperor disapproved of the practice and issued an order to put a check upon it. The order issued to the provincial *Diwan* laid down that no one should be allowed to acquire *ijara* rights in the *khalisa* and *jagir* lands and that the *Diwan* should issue orders to the *Amins* for necessary action.<sup>169</sup> Another order, entitled "about prohibiting *ijara*", is available in the *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*. It is not dated nor can a probable date be assigned to it. We can only say that it belongs to the reign of Aurangzeb. It laid down that the *Amins* and *Karoris* of the *khalisa* lands should not farm out villages in the *parganas* entrusted to them to any of their relations, to government servants and to the *Chaudharis*, so that the owners of the village might properly manage their affairs and pay land-re-

166. *Amal-i-Salib*, I, p. 495.

167. Sadiq Khan, r. 174, Or. 11a.

168. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, ff. 129b-131ab.

169. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 292.



venue. However, the regulation provided that a deserted village or a village inhabited by extremely poor cultivators could be farmed out and the assessed *jama* was to be collected according to the conditions laid down in the agreement. The permission to farm out such a village was, however, qualified by two conditions ; first, the consent of the owner had to be obtained ; secondly, it was to be farmed out to a person who was neither a government servant nor a *Chaudhari*.<sup>170</sup>

It will be seen that the order, contained in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, was meant to be applied to both the *khalisa* and *jagirs* lands but the order in the *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi* specifically refers to the measures to be taken in the *khalisa* lands. Again, while the order contained in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* excludes any provision for revenue-farming under any circumstances, the order available in the *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi* provides for limited permission to farm out land in the *khalisa* lands subject to certain conditions. It provides for revenue-farming of the villages where *jama* had decreased considerably. That the provision was actually put into practice is confirmed by another order issued in the reign of Aurangzeb on an application praying for the grant of two or three villages on *ijara* rights. The order requires the local administration to find out such villages as were deserted or in which cultivation had been abandoned and to farm them against a fixed *jama*.<sup>171</sup> Thus although it was the general policy of the Revenue Ministry to prohibit and check the practice of revenue-farming, yet as a matter of routine the administration granted permission for the practice only in special circumstances. However, it appears that the Revenue Ministry strongly disapproved of the practice if the farmers happened to be government servants, *Chaudharis* and *Muqaddams* and saw to it that such a practice was discontinued.

This appears to have been the policy of the Revenue Ministry about the practice of *ijara*. However, evidence relating to a period subsequent to the year 1676 A.D. indicates that the practice of revenue-farming continued inspite of the standing orders against it, issued in 1676 A.D. The *Farhang-i-Kardani*, a work compiled in 1090 A.H./1679 A.D. contains a form of *qabuliat* (deed of agreement) on behalf of the revenue-farmer for the payment of assessed *jama* for the *pargana* leased out to them with *ijara* rights. The note attached to the document adds that the *Amin* and the *Karori* used to lease out certain villages with *ijara* rights.<sup>172</sup> The evidence suggests that in the closing years of the 1670's *ijara* was a recognised practice in land-revenue administration. We have earlier examined in some detail the orders prohibiting the practice of *ijara*. The conflicting evidence can be understood only if we assume that the order contained in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*

170. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, p. 189.

171. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, p. 149.

172. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 35a.



dealt with a specific situation in Gujarat in the year 1676 A.D. and that the order contained in the *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi* represented the legal position of the practice in a more comprehensive form, as it made the necessary provision for revenue-farming under special circumstances. The evidence contained in the *Farhang-i-Kardani* represents only such cases in which land could be farmed out within the framework of the regulations laid down in the order contained in the *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*. Whether the practice of revenue-farming conformed to the regulations or was a violation of them, the fact remains that revenue-farming continued even after the year 1676 A.D. We read elsewhere that in the year 1100 A.H./1699 A.D. the village Hisampur, in the Palul *Pargana* was held with *ijara* rights.<sup>173</sup> We find Rani Hadi, the widow of Maharaja Jaswant Singh, praying for the grant of *Pargana* Jodhpur as *jagir*. In case her request could not be acceded to for some reason she requested that the said *pargana* might be leased out to her in *ijara* rights.<sup>174</sup>

It appears that strict rules and regulations for transacting business in all departments were disregarded since the reign of Jahandar Shah.<sup>175</sup> However, under Farrukh Siyyar the entire administration was thrown into confusion, and the evil practice of *ijara* was encouraged and patronised by those who were at the helm of affairs. According to Shakir Khan, Sadiq Khan never farmed out lands. After his removal from the office the evil practice of *ijara* was again introduced by Ratan Chand, the *Diwan* of Abdullah Khan, the *Wazir*. It ruined a large number of people.<sup>176</sup> We learn elsewhere that Farrukh Siyyar had deep rooted animosity against Abdullah Khan. One of the grievances against the *Wazir* was that whenever he appointed an *Amil* he took from the appointee an undertaking and realised money from his banker. Farrukh Siyyar realised that the practice would ruin the country in which appointments were made under such conditions. The Emperor pointed out that since the innovation would ruin the country it should be abandoned, and the *Amil* should be appointed as a regular government servant fully accountable for the collections made by him. Abdullah Khan, however, did not agree with the Emperor. We are told by Khafi Khan that Ratan Chand interfered in the affairs of the Revenue Ministry so much that the *Diwan-i-tan* and *Diwan-i-Khalisa* were relegated to an extremely subordinate position and the *khalisa parganas* were leased out in *ijara* like the sale of a commodity, bringing lacs of rupees to Ratan Chand. This practice intensified the Emperor's displeasure towards Sayyid Abdullah Khan.<sup>177</sup>

173. *Durrul-Ulm*, f. 65a.

174. *Waqai-i-Suba Ajmer*, p. 95.

175. *Later Mughals*, I, p. 335.

176. *Tarikh-i-Shakir Kabni*, f. 58a.

177. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 773.



The evil practice of *ijara* continued unabated till the middle of the eighteenth century. When Nizam-ul-Mulk assumed the *wizarat* (1721). He examined the working of the revenue administration in some detail. He drew up a comprehensive scheme for introducing necessary reforms. One of his main proposals was to abolish the practice of revenue-farming in the *khalisa* lands which had ruined the country.<sup>178</sup> The proposed reforms were approved by the Emperor and it was hoped that land-revenue administration would be soon reorganised on a sound footing. But the proposed reforms hit the vested interest very hard and they retaliated before they found themselves helpless against the person who had set himself against corruption and nepotism. They succeeded in alienating the Emperor from the *Wazir* who had to leave Delhi in 1723. The administrative importance of the issue can be judged from the fact that a reconciliation between the *Wazir* and the Emperor could be effected only if the former agreed to the implementation of the proposed reform for abolishing the evil practice of *ijara*.<sup>179</sup>

There is some evidence to show that the practice of farming out the *khalisa* and *jagir* lands continued during the remaining years of Muhammad Shah's reign. We read elsewhere that Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela obtained a number of *mahals* with *ijara* rights from ease-loving *jagirdars* and the careless *Wazir*. Two documents contained in the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* show that the revenue-farming of *khalisa* and *jagir* lands was a well established practice in the reign of Muhammad Shah. The *arzdasht* of Sobha Singh *zamindar* reveals the presence of moneyed *ijarahdars* in his *taalluqa*. The evidence directly confirms the evidence contained in the other sources examined by us and gives a real insight into the working of the *ijarahdari* system. It appears that the head of the local land-revenue administration had charged Sobha Singh *zamindar* with failure to pay land-revenue which established against him a clear case of insubordination and hostility to the government. In the *arzdast*, referred to, the *zamindar* refutes the charges levelled against him and while describing the agrarian conditions prevailing in his *taalluqa*, he criticises the role of the *ijarahdar* and makes a concrete proposal for a fair assessment of land-revenue. He refers to the former days of prosperity and good administration and adds that during the preceding four or five years the moneyed farmers, inexperienced and indifferent to the prosperity of the country, had come to his *taalluqa* from the head-quarters. They were primarily interested in exacting the maximum land-revenue and worked for the ruin of the country and the ryots. For these reasons, it would appear from the *arzdast*, Sobha

178. Ibid, II, p. 77.

179. *Later Munbals*, Irvine, II, p. 136.

180. *Siyar-ul-Mutaakkbirin*, III, p. 854.

181. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, II, ff. 68, 69.

182. Ibid, ff. 51, 52.



Singh had made up his mind to compete with the farmers and engaged for the excessive land-revenue demand. He tried to face the situation to the utmost limit of his resources but he was driven to extreme helplessness on account of the progressively unfair increase in the land-revenue demand. Ultimately he succumbed and withdrew from the contest. The *taalluqa* was ruined and the farmers had left the district. The head of the local administration was again compelled to settle terms with the hereditary *zamindar*.

The evidence furnished by our sources gives a fairly good idea of the extent of the practice and its effects on the social and economic life of the country. It is clear that the practice of revenue-farming had become very common and widespread in the reign of Farrukh Siyyar and this state of affairs continued till the middle of the eighteenth century. The extraordinary extension of the practice of *ijara* adversely affected the working of the land-revenue administration and weakened its stability still further. It gave rise to a class of bankers and speculators who invested their money in the business of revenue-farming and thus emerged as a class of intermediaries distinct from the hereditary *zamindars*. The new class of *ijarahdars* generally came from the cities and proved to be a constant source of danger to the interests of the *zamindars*. The rise of the new class of intermediaries, who had been imposed from above, created conditions which led to a keen competition to engage for land-revenue demand exceeding the normal *jama*. The settlement was made with the highest bidder and this practice tended to increase the *jama* figures for revenue settlement. The hereditary *zamindars* were thus faced with an extremely difficult position. They were faced with the dilemma of either outbidding the *ijarahdar* or withdrawing from the contest and in either case ruin stared them in the face. In case a *zamindar* engaged for an exorbitant land-revenue demand he could save little for himself unless he transferred the burden on to the peasants and indulged in callous rackrenting. But, the latter course could ruin the peasants and the village would be deserted. To withdraw from the contest meant the immediate loss of his livelihood. Thus the overall effect of the widespread practice of revenue-farming was the ruin of a large number of ancient hereditary *zamindars*. It was under these agrarian conditions that a new class of *zamindars* arose which replaced the ancient hereditary *zamindars*. When faced with extreme financial difficulties many of the *zamindars*, who were outbidden by the *ijarahdars*, were compelled to sell their *zamindari* rights to those who could purchase them. Naturally the wealthier of neighbouring *zamindars*

183. An examination of the sale deeds of *zamindaris* preserved in the State Records Office at Allahabad indicates that the *zamindaris* were sold on a large scale in the first-half of the 18th century.

cf. "Like the great *zamindars* of Bengal, the original possession of many of the *Talookdars* in the Western Provinces seems to be a matter of comparative recent history. Nay, it is generally far more easy to trace them to their origin as farmers of Govt. Revenue". (Selection from the Revenue Records, p. 89).



and bankers from the city availed themselves of the opportunity and these sales of *zamindaris* considerably affected the social and economic complexion of rural Hindustan. The rich and powerful neighbouring *zamindars* were engaged in carving out their estates or *taalluqas* whereas the city bankers emerged as absentee landlords. Thus the social and economic stability of rural India was seriously disturbed and it could be restored only when the Britishers took over the administration of the country in the second-half of the eighteenth century and the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

The effects of the *ijarahdari* system on the peasantry were even worse. Whether the settlement was made with the *ijarahdar* or with the *zamindar*, the conditions created by artificial competition invariably tended to increase the land-revenue, and ultimately the burden fell on the peasantry. We have noted that our authorities bitterly complain of the ruin of the entire people of the country except the bankers. The evidence contained in the chronicles compiled at the capital or at provincial headquarters is directly confirmed by the *zamindar* Sobha Singh who was an eye witness to the ruin brought to the peasants and the countryside by the greedy farmers. Thus we can conclude that the cause of the poverty and distress of the peasantry is not to be sought in the magnitude of the land-revenue demand but in the practice of *jara* which created artificial conditions of competition among the *ijarahdars* and the hereditary *zamindars* and ultimately led to the fixation of the land-revenue demand which was excessive and incompatible with the paying capacity of an assessment unit. The burden of the increased land-revenue demand was, however, distributed among the peasants and it meant a more intensive exploitation of the peasantry.

It remains to investigate the effects of revenue-farming on land-revenue administration and on the State treasury. The widespread practice of *ijara* hardly left any room for the regular servants of the State who were employed for the detailed assessment and collection of land-revenue. It meant a loss of jobs to a class of people who had specialized in the work of land-revenue administration and at the same time it marked the complete breakdown of the administrative machinery at the *pargana* level which had been so assiduously built up by the Mughal emperors since the days of Akbar. The practice of *ijara* also resulted in the loss of revenues to the public treasury. The intense exploitation of the peasantry coupled with unstable agrarian conditions brought ruin to the cultivator and the villages were deserted. The oppressed peasantry took refuge in the nearby *zamindaris* which were owned by powerful *zamindars* who openly defied the authority of the State, neglected the payment of land-revenue and paid it only when a powerful noble led an expedition against them. Thus although the settlement of

184. We are told by Khafi Khan that the people of the country belonging to every class hated Sayyid Brothers and Ratan Chand who patronised only the Sayyids of Baraha and the *baqqals* (bankers). *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 902.



revenue demand at the highest bid might bring some more money to the public treasury for a few years, ultimately it led to the complete loss of revenues from such areas which were leased out to the speculative *ijarahdars*. The fact was recognised by contemporary historians and administrators. Even the puppet Emperor Farrukh Siyyar strongly disapproved of this evil practice and did his best to stop it. But his opposition was silenced by the vested interests headed by Ratan Chand. Later, Nizam-ul-Mulk attached the greatest importance to the abolition of the practice for any workable re-organisation of the land-revenue administration. However, his scheme of comprehensive reforms including the abolition of revenue-farming hit the vested interests very hard. They retaliated and proved strong enough to compel him to relinquish his office.

It may be argued that the demand for the abolition of revenue farming on the part of the Emperor Farrukh Siyyar indicated nothing more than the whims and caprices of a weak mind, incapable of grasping the real facts of land-revenue administration. Similarly, Nizam-ul-Mulk was a dreamer when he drew up his scheme of comprehensive reforms. The conditions that characterised the land-revenue administration were such that no tangible reforms could be successfully implemented. This assumption may be justified on the ground that the *khalisa* lands were considerably decreased and this was accompanied by a corresponding decrease in the income of the public treasury. By farming out the *khalisa* lands to the highest bidder the maximum of the revenues could be drawn to the public exchequer which hardly enjoyed sufficient financial stability to meet the expenditure. In other words, it was a measure of expediency to meet the abnormal conditions in the land-revenue administration. However, an examination of the available facts hardly lends any support to the assumption. The fact is that the measure of expediency continued to weaken the financial stability of the State on account of the progressive decrease in income which accrued through the ruin of the cultivation and the peasantry on an unprecedented scale. Thus the introduction of the practice of *ijara* cannot be described as a successful and wise measure of expedieny.

In fact the evil practice owed its origin and development to the greediness and selfishness of the rich bankers and speculators, who wanted to exploit the people and the State for their own highly objectionable ends. They conspired with the corrupt Ratan Chand and bought his patronage by paying enormous sums which were shared by Ratan Chand and his greedy but inefficient masters. Thus revenue-farming was practiced on a large scale to serve the interests of the class of bankers, the *Wazir* and his *Diwan*, Ratan Chand. There was neither any administrative nor any fiscal justification for the introduction of the practice, nor did the conditions in the land-revenue system make it indispensable. It can be best described as unsurpion and loot on the part of a class which had neither any interest in the soil nor was fit or capable of making any contribution to the admini-



strative system of the country. Therefore, revenue farming and the class of *ijarahdars* were an undesirable imposition on the rural economy of the country by a person who was placed at the helm of affairs by the irony of fate. A careful analysis of the conditions characterising the land-revenue administration during the period will show that the abolition of the practice was the need of the hour. Even if the proposed reform proved a failure it was worth-trying. It would have checked and not accelerated the process of the disintegration of the land-revenue administration which came in the wake of revenue-farming. To conclude, the practice of *ijara* brought ruin to those who had some interest in land and resulted in the progressive loss of revenue to the public treasury. Those who were responsible for it were traitors to the sovereign, to the State and to the people.



## CHAPTER V

### DIVISION OF LAND-REVENUE

Land revenue was allocated to and appropriated by three different agencies namely the government, the *jagirdars* and the *madad-maash* holders. A number of *mahals* were earmarked as *khalisa*. Land-revenue of these *mahals* was collected by the *Karoris* or the *Amils* appointed by the *Diwan i-ala* and the collections were remitted to government treasuries. Land-revenue in the majority of *mahals* was, however, assigned to the *mansabdars*<sup>1</sup>, in lieu of their salaries, and they collected it through their own *Amils*. A small portion of land-revenue in all the provinces was granted to the needy, the pious, the learned, and to the Shaikhs and Sayyids. A number of villages in a *pargana*<sup>2</sup> or a number of *bighas*<sup>3</sup> in a village were earmarked as *aima* or *madad-maash* lands and the grantees were entitled to appropriate the land-revenue of these villages. They were exempted from various taxes levied on the other sections of the agricultural community. The villages or the *bighas* thus granted were excluded from *jama*; in other words the villages or the area of land earmarked as *madad-maash* or *aima* was not subject to assessment and did not form a part of the *jama* of the *khalisa* or *jagir* lands.

Such a division of land-revenue gave rise to a number of administrative problems; at the same time it created two distinct institutions, namely the *jagirdari* system and the institution of revenue-free grants. Whereas the developments in the *jagirdari* system considerably affected the working of the land-revenue administration, the institution of *madad-maash* lands made a strong impact on the social and economic life of the rural Hindustan. For these reasons the division of land-revenue into three heads or categories and the consequences that followed it deserve careful study.

#### Section I

#### KHALISA LANDS

The bulk of the imperial territory consisted of the *mahals* and *parganas* assigned to *mansabdars* in lieu of their salaries for services rendered to the

1. *Mansabdar*: holder of a *mansab* or a rank in the imperial service denoting his obligation to maintain a fixed number of horsemen.

2. *Siyaq Nama*, pp. 37-39.

3. *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 3, 156, 157, 162.



State. The remaining *mahals* and *parganas* in almost all the provinces were earmarked as *khalisa* or *khalisa sharifa* and the income from them was remitted to the imperial treasuries. It appears that a distinction was made between the sources of income for the personal expenses of the Emperor and the sources of income claimed for the public treasury. The *parganas* or the *mahals* which were reserved for the personal expenses of the Emperor were known as *sarf-i-khas*. Such *parganas* were put in charge of separate officials and the income from them was deposited in a separate treasury.<sup>4</sup> The income from the *khalisa* lands of a *mahal* or *pargana* was deposited in the local treasury and after meeting the expenses of local administration the balance was remitted to the imperial treasury at the provincial headquarters;<sup>5</sup> or it could be disbursed as directed by the Revenue Ministry. Stray references suggest that the *parganas* earmarked as *khalisa* were well cultivated and the collection of assessed land-revenue was fairly satisfactory.<sup>6</sup>

### Extent

The area of the *khalisa* lands under the Mughals fluctuated from time to time and from reign to reign. The increase or decrease in the area of *khalisa* lands was affected by developments in the *jagirdari* system, the character of the emperor, his lack of interest in the details of administration or the requirements of a given situation. Our authorities do not give the *jama* figures for the *khalisa* lands under Akbar but it appears that after the 15th regnal year the administration of the *khalisa* lands was put on a sound footing and the *parganas* and *mahals* known as the *khalisa* provided enough income to maintain a rich imperial treasury. Jahangir, it appears, neglected revenue administration and his officers were corrupt and fraudulent. Consequently, agriculture received a set-back. The income from the *khalisa* lands fell to 50 lacs of rupees and large sums were drawn from the reserves accumulated by Akbar. Shahjahan, on his accession, gave his attention to the affairs of the *khalisa* administration, and *mahals* valued at a *jama* of 150 lacs of rupees were earmarked as *khalisa*<sup>8</sup>. Gradually the income of the *khalisa* lands increased and at the end of the 20th regnal year out of a total *jama*

4. *Mirat-ul-Istilah*, f. 15a.

5. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, p. 140.

6. *Waqai-Ajmer* p. 65.

7. *Akbar Nama*, II, 333. The inference is substantially corroborated by evidence contained in the *Maasir-ul-Umara*. A passage in the *Maasir* gives a sketch of the financial history of the Mughal Empire and says due to the rapid expansion of the Empire under Akbar while the expenditure increased, the income also increased enormously and great accumulations were made. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, II, p. 814.

8. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, II, p. 148; an incidental reference in the *Badshah Nama* reveals that in the 4th regnal year the *jama* of the *khalisa* lands had increased to 80 *karor* dams or 2 *karor* of rupees. The *khalisa* lands during the period comprised one-eleventh of the imperial territory.



of 880 *Karors* of *dams*, 120 *Karors* of *dams* or three *Karors* of rupees were earmarked as *khalisa*.<sup>9</sup> At the end of his reign, the *jama* of the *khalisa* stood at nearly four *Karors* of rupees.<sup>10</sup> In the 13th regnal year of Aurangzeb the *jama* of the *khalisa* lands was fixed at 4 *Karors* of rupees.<sup>11</sup> Thus the extent of the *khalisa* lands considerably increased under Shahjahan and it remained more or less the same under Aurangzeb.<sup>12</sup>

After the death of Aurangzeb, the process was reversed and the area of *khalisa* lands began to decrease. The process of decrease continued unchecked and by the time of Muhammad Shah's accession the bulk of the *khalisa mahals* had been assigned to the nobles. This state of affairs caused anxiety to Nizam-ul-Mulk when he examined the revenue records after his appointment as *Wazir*. He also found an extraordinary increase in the ranks of *mansabdars* and in the award of *mansabs* to those who were hardly qualified for holding even small ranks of a few hundred.<sup>13</sup> The two facts noted by Nizam-ul-Mulk were not isolated and, in fact, provided the clue to the explanation of the unusual developments in the land-revenue administration. Our authorities on the reigns of Bahadur Shah and Farrukh Siyyar record an unprecedented increase in the *mansabs* and lavish award of these to the new classes who clamoured for *mansabs* and *jagirs*. The Deccanis and the Marathas had already swelled the number of *mansabdars* in the last two decades of Aurangzeb's reign and it had become difficult to provide *jagirs* to fresh recruits as late as 1691 A.D. But the recruitments could not be stopped in the reign of Aurangzeb.<sup>14</sup> On the accession of Bahadur Shah *mansabs* were awarded and increase in rank was granted without any reference to the qualifications and merits of the grantee and without any regard for the rules and regulations governing their award. Neither was any heed paid to the unusual development in the *jagirdari* system so that in the first year of the reign a large number of *amirs* could not be provided with *jagirs* against the *mansabs* held by them. Consequently, the *mansabs* in the majority of cases became more or less nominal.<sup>15</sup> It is probable that under such conditions a deviation was made and the practice of assigning of *mahals* earmarked as *khalisa* was introduced. We know that a crisis in the *jagirdari* and *mansabdari* system, caused by lavish increase in

9. *Badshah Nama*, II, p. 711, 712; *Maasir-ul-Umara*, II, p. 815.

10. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, II, pp. 814, 815.

11. *Ibid*, II, p. 813.

12. The *jama* figures for the unspecified years in each of the reigns are given in the *ẓawabit-i-iʿAlamgiri* (f. 81 ab).

Shahjahan (a) 1, 34, 46, 70, 245 *dams*

(b) 1, 25, 76, 60, 647 *dams*

Aurangzeb (a) 1, 31, 35, 61, 365 *dams*

(b) 1, 24, 54, 64, 650 *dams*

13. *Aḥwal-ul-khawāqin*, f. 182; *Shah Nama-i-Munawwar-ul-Kalam*, f. 86a.

14. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, pp. 413, 414.

15. For a detailed discussion see Chapter V, Section II.



*mansabs*, in the reign of Jahangir had resulted in a considerable decrease in the area of the *khalisa* lands. The decrease in the number of available *jagirs* in the reign of Bahadur Shah became so acute that there was no alternative for meeting the crisis except by assigning the *khalisa mahals* and thus decreasing the area of the *khalisa*. The practice of making such assignments assumed larger proportions in the reign of Farrukh Siyyar. The political developments in the country, the scramble for power among the factions and parties at the Court, the timid policy of appeasement followed by the Emperor, the inclusion of new classes the Kashmiris, the Hindus and the Khwajasaras—who received high *mansabs* and rich *jagirs* at the cost of other sections—accentuated the crisis. It appears that under the pressure exercised by the powerful class of *mansabdars* the puppet Emperor virtually surrendered the right of the State to the *mansabdars* and within a few years almost the entire *khalisa* land passed into their hands. Thus the main cause of decrease in the area of *khalisa* lands and its almost extinction at a later stage can be traced back to the crisis in the *mansabdari* and *jagirdari* system. To it may be added such factors as the weak character of the emperors, the party politics at the Court and the neglect of State business by those who were entrusted with the office of the *wizarat*.

### *Jama and Hasil*

We have noted that the majority of the imperial servants known as the *mansabdars*, were paid in the form of assignment and, therefore, it became necessary that the estimated income of the imperial territory should be ascertained. This necessitated the valuation of every village and more especially of every *mahal*. It was technically known as *jama* or *jamadami*. *Jama*, broadly speaking, included the estimated income from all the sources of income of a *mahal* which were generally classified under the heads of *mal-o-jihat*, *sair-jihat* and *sair-ul-wajuh*. However, in calculating the *jama* of a *mahal* all cultivable land within it was taken into account and an assessment was made of it. But there are indications that generally the entire cultivable land within a village or a *mahal* was not brought under cultivation and a considerable part of it was left fallow. It has been recognised that under the Mughals the land was waiting for men and there was not enough capital and manpower to bring all the cultivable land under cultivation.<sup>16</sup> Thus a considerable part of the land was left fallow and was not actually assessed. This peculiar agrarian condition gave rise to a wide gap between the *jama* calculated on the basis of

16. Describing the condition of land and cultivation Bernier says, "that even of those that would be fertile, there is much that is not used for want of workmen." Bernier, part II, p. 5; also see *Agrarian System*, Moreland, Introduction p. xii.



hypothetical assessment and *hal-i-hasil* or actual assessment of land-revenue for a given year.<sup>17</sup> The land-revenue administration took due note of the fact and the *dastur-ul-amals* invariably record the *jama* and *hal-i-hasil* figures separately. It may, however, be noted that for a variety of reasons the area under cultivation in a certain year could increase considerably and could be regarded as the maximum for the preceding few years. In such a year the actual assessment closely approximated to the hypothetical assessment and such an assessment was known as *hasil-i-sal kamil* or *hasil-i-kamil*.

In the early years of Akbar's reign the *jama* was determined arbitrarily and was known as the *Jama Raqami Qalami*. It was increased on paper because the number of available *jagirs* was small and the number of those claiming *jagirs* was very large. It appears that the *Jama Raqami Qalami* affected the working of the *jagirdari* system adversely and it was set aside in the 11th or the 15th year by Muazffar Khan and Raja Todar Mal. The new *jama* was calculated on the basis of the accounts obtained from the local *Qanungos* and was based on an estimate of the *hal-i-hasil* or assessed land-revenue. It was slightly less than the former *jama* but there was still a wide gap between the *jama* and *hal-i-hasil*, so that the *jagirdars*, soldiers and peasants were put to considerable distress. In the 19th regnal year the bulk of the imperial territory except Bengal, Gujrat and Kabul was resumed to *khalisa* and the *jagirdari* system for the time-being was suspended. In the 24th regnal year the *Jama Dah Sala* was prepared by striking the average of the revenue demand for the last ten years (15th to 23rd regnal year) and taking into consideration any improvement in the conditions of production and fluctuations in prices.<sup>18</sup> The account of the *Jama Dah Sala* in the *Akbar Nama* suggests that the reforms aimed at narrowing down the gap between the *jama* and *hal-i-hasil* figures and that the Revenue Ministry did succeed in its objective when the *Jama Dah Sala* was finally prepared. With the preparation of a satisfactory *jama* the practice of assignment was revived.<sup>19</sup>

Under Akbar the *jama* amounted to more than 500 *karors* of *dams*<sup>20</sup>. At the end of Jahangir's reign it stood at 700 *karors* of *dams*.<sup>21</sup> The marked increase in the *jama* figures can be attributed either to the increase in the area under cultivation, to a rise in the prices or to both. Again the *jama* figures were probably inflated in order to meet the situation caused by increase in *mansabs* and in the number of *mansabdars*. We know that the Emperor Jahangir inau-

17. *hal-i-hasil* has also been rendered as revenue collections. (See *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, Irfan, p. 264 f. n.). The present writer finds it difficult to agree with the interpretation. However the interpretation given in the above discussion is tentative.

18. The above summary is based on the evidence contained in the *Akbar Nama*, and the *Ain*. For reference see *Akbar Nama*, II p. 207, *Akbar Nama*, III p. 114-117, 282; *Ain*, II p. 2.

19. *Agrarian System*, pp. 97, 98.

20. *Ain-i-Akbari*, II, p. 48.

21. *Badshah-Nama*, II, p. 711.



gured a policy of lavish increase in the *mansabs*.<sup>22</sup> The fact that the land-revenue administration under Jahangir suffered from inflated *jama* is suggested by the reforms undertaken by Shahjahan who introduced the month-proportions for the assignment of *jagirs* and corresponding month-scales for determining the pay and military obligations of the *jagirdars*.<sup>23</sup> The inference is directly confirmed by Pelsaret, a contemporary Dutch writer. He tells us that the valuation of *jagirs* was inflated. A *jagir* with a valuation of 50,000 rupees, did not sometimes yield even 25,000 rupees although the peasants were rackrented. The evil of the inflated *jama* had its repercussions on the *mansabdari* system and impaired the efficiency of the imperial service. According to Pelsaret many assignees who held the rank of 5,000 horse did not even keep 1,000 in the service.<sup>24</sup>

Under Shahjahan, the wide disparity between the *jama* and *hal-i-hasil* was recognised as an established fact and no attempt was made to narrow down the gap between the two figures. On the other hand, a new method was devised to determine the expected income of the *jagirdar* and his obligations were accordingly laid down. The *hal-i-hasil* or actual assessment for each *mahal* was ascertained and it was expressed in month-proportions to *jama* which indicated the *hal-i-hasil* for twelve months. If the *hal-i-hasil* of a *mahal* amounted to two-thirds of the *jama*, the *mahal* was described as eight-monthly; if the *hal-i-hasil* equalled one-half of the *jama* the *mahal* was classified as six monthly and so on. The pay scales of the *mansabdars* and their military obligations were consequently determined in accordance with the *hal-i-hasil* of their *jagirs*.<sup>25</sup>

### *Jama Figures*

The *jama* figures for the reigns of Mughal emperors (Akbar to Bahadur Shah) are available in the *Ain*, the *Badshah Nama* and in a number of *dastur-ul-amals*. A comparative analysis of *jama* figures<sup>26</sup> reveals that they tended to increase from the reign of Akbar onwards till the climax was reached by the end of Aurangzeb's reign. The total increase in *jama* figures can be explained partly by the addition of territories in the Deccan and partly by

22. *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, pp. 4, 5. According to the *Tuzuk*, *mansabs* were increased in the proportion of 10:30 and 10:40. The lowest increase in the *mansab* amounted to one half of the existing rank.

23. *Badshah Nama*, II pp. 566, 507; *Mirat*, I, p. 227-228; see also Rank (*Mansab*) in the *Mughal State Service*, W. H. Moreland, Journal of The Royal Asiatic Society, 1936; *The Mansabdari System*, Abdul Aziz.

24. Pelsaret, p. 54.

25. The interpretation is based on the administrative literature of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb's reigns. The main references are cited below:

*Selected Documents*, pp. 64, 248; *Ruqqat-i-Alamgii*, pp. 10, 88, 107, 118, 121, 2, 130-131, 135, 163-64; *Badshah Nama*, II, p. 506; *Mirat-i-Abmadi*, I, p. 227-229.

26. See Appendix 'E.'



the increased income from taxation on the expanding trade and commerce. But an examination of the comparative *jama* figures for various provinces and even for *sarkars* in various reigns reveals that *jama* figures had witnessed a definite and notable increase in almost every *pargana* of the Empire.

## Section II

### JAGIRDARI SYSTEM

Under the Mughals the imperial territory, for purposes of land-revenue administration, was divided somewhat unevenly into the two broad categories of the *khalisa* and *jagir mahals*. The *mahals* earmarked as *jagirs* but not yet assigned constituted a sub-category and were known as *mahal-i-pai-baqi*.<sup>27</sup> The bulk of the imperial territory consisted of *jagir* lands and the revenue of these lands was assigned to imperial servants known as the *mansabdars* in lieu of their salaries according to their ranks in the imperial service. These assignees were entitled to collect the revenue of the *mahals* assigned to them as *jagir*<sup>28</sup> or *iqtaa*<sup>29</sup> and in this capacity they were known as *jagirdars* or *tiyuldars*. Each *mansabdar* held a definite rank in the imperial service which was either a single *zat* rank or a double rank comprising *zat* and *sawar* ranks. The pay scales of *zat* and *sawar* ranks were separately laid down and the salary of a *mansabdar* holding a certain rank was accordingly calculated in terms of *dams*.<sup>30</sup> An area comprising a single *mahâl*, a part of *mahal* or more than one *mahal*, yielding an estimated income equal to the salary thus calculated, was assigned to him as his *jagir*. (This estimated income was technically known as *jama* or *jamadani* and included land-revenue as well as income from other heads of taxation such as *hasil-sair*, and *peshkash*. The income from transit duties and from the taxes on the commodities bought or sold in towns or markets constituted separate *mahals*, known as *sair mahals*, and these were often assigned as *jagir*.<sup>31</sup> The salary of the *mansabdars*, however, could also be paid in cash and those *mansabdars* who received cash salaries were known

27. *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, f. 48b.

28. The author of the *Mirat-ul-Istilah* makes a distinction between *jagir* and *tiyul* as the *jagir* was assigned to nobles and *mansabdars* and the *tiyul* was assigned to the princes and persons belonging to the royal family. See *Mirat-ul-Istilah* f. 15a. It is, however, to be noted that in the chronicles and documents of the Mughal period the two terms indicate an assignment with no special meaning attached to either.

29. *Iqtaa* is also used in the sense of assignment but its use is rather rare. See *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 355.

30. For details see "Mansabdari System" by Abdul Aziz; *Selected Documents of Shahjahan's Reign*, pp. 80, 81; *Farhangi-Kardani* ff. 21a-24a; *Khulasat-us-Siyag*, ff. 76a-77b.

31. *Aamal-i-Salih*, III, pp. 65, 149; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, pp. 305, 329, 337.



as *naqdis*.<sup>32</sup> An assignment which carried no obligation with it and marked an increased in the *mansab* was known as *inam*.<sup>33</sup>

The *jagirdari* system under the Mughals developed as a distinct institution and was governed by elaborate rules and regulations. The foundations of this unique institution were laid under Akbar but it was Shahjahan who transformed the simple organisation into a complex institution. Gradually the institution emerged as the most characteristic feature of the Mughal administrative system. Primarily, the system was evolved to secure the efficient and disciplined services of a body of men and at the same time to relieve the government of the enormous burden of land-revenue administration and the maintenance of law and order in the rural areas. But by the end of the 17th century it began to threaten the administrative and economic stability of the Empire. It is, therefore, necessary to ascertain the essentials of the system and to investigate its nature and working in greater detail.

### Nature of the Institution

The institution of *jagirdari*, as it developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, appears to have been complex and subject to constant changes. It was complex in the sense that the lands assigned as *jagirs* were subject to the dual authority of the State and *jagirdars*. Whereas the estimated income of a *jagir* was to be calculated by the Revenue Ministry, the actual assessment and collections were made by the *jagirdar* or his agent.<sup>34</sup> Again even in matters of assessing individual holdings the *jagirdar* did not have a free hand, but was required to conform to the rates sanctioned by the Revenue Ministry. The practice of transferring *jagirs* further complicated the working of the land-revenue administration in a *jagir*. Elaborate and precise rules were laid down to divide the collections, if the *jagir* was transferred in the middle of the year, between the former *jagirdar*, the government and the new assignee.<sup>35</sup> The constant attempt to narrow down the gap between the *jama* and the *hal-i-hasil* and the later development of determining the obligations ac-

32. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, pp. 227-228, 229; elaborate rules for calculating cash salaries are laid down in the *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, 77b-83a; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 24ab.

33. The author of the *Alamgir Nama* says that in the Mughals Empire no one except the princes of the royal blood was raised to rank above 7000/7000. As a mark of favour and consideration to a noble who had already obtained the high rank of 7,000/7,000 the Emperor granted an additional assignment over and above the *jagir* assigned to the noble as his salary which was known as *inam*. *Alamgir Nama* I, 618. See also *Amal-i-Solih*, III, p. 207; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 291. *Inam* also signified a rent-free grant.

34. *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 381; *Nigare-Nama-i-Munshi* p. 27; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 61ab, 73ab.

35. *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, f. 48b; *Siyaq Nama*, p. 40-48.



cording to the *hal-i-hasil* indicate, the complex pattern of jagir administration. (The institution was also subject to constant changes since the reign of Akbar, and was extremely sensitive to political, administrative or economic changes. The extension of the Empire, the weakening of the central authority, increase in the number of *mansabdars*, famine, scarcity and impoverishment of peasantry or *zamindars* seriously disturbed the working of the *jagirdari* system.) An attempt is made here to underline the main features of the institution and note the changes in it which ultimately led to its decline by the middle of the eighteenth century.

### Transfer of jagirs

The jagirdari system in essence was a mode of payment by assignments. The *jagirdar* was entitled to collect the revenue from the *mahal* assigned to him as *jagir* in order to meet his own expenses and those of the contingent maintained by him for the service of the Emperor.) The assignment of a *jagir* as a mode of payment implied that his claim was strictly limited to the revenue of the assigned *mahal* and this fact was specifically stated in the order of assignment.<sup>36</sup> (It also implied that the *jagirdar* could not claim any right or title to the land in the *mahal* assigned to him.) However, the right of assessment and collection of land-revenue in a particular area for a considerable time could be ~~availed of to create some sort of permanent right or claim to land of to establish local connections which might be utilised for acquiring the right of property in land in one capacity or another.~~ A long tenure as a *jagirdar* involved such possibilities and the Mughal emperors who introduced the *jagirdari* system to secure an efficient and loyal imperial service took the necessary measures to forestall the danger. This object was attained by introducing the practice of constant transfer of the *jagirs*.<sup>37</sup> It was Akbar who deliberately planned to transfer the *jagirs* of the Atka Khail in the Panjab,<sup>38</sup> and to provide alternative assignments in various provinces in the 13th regnal year. Abul Fazl has dealt with this in some detail. According to him the practice of the transfer of *jagir* was essential if the *jagirdars* were to be kept within their proper limits and the interests of the ryots were to be served. In order to attain these ends the *jagirdars* who had been concentrated in a locality had to be stationed in different regions because such a staggering led, in fact, to peace and stability.<sup>38</sup> The practice introduced by Akbar

36. The *parwana* dated 19th May, 1635 A.D. issued by *Wazir* Afzal Khan reads that Sayyid Abdul Wahab was assigned 36, 68, 100, *dams* in *Pargana* Daryapur, *Sakar* Gawil, *Suba* Berar, and that the *Deshmukhs*, *Muqaddams* and cultivators were instructed to acknowledge him as the *Jagirdar* of the said amount and pay land-revenue and other taxes to his agents. *Selected Documents of Shahjahan's Reign*, pp. 4, 5; also see pp. 17, 18, 23, 147.

27. *Akbar Nama*, II pp. 332, 333.

38. *Akbar Nama*, II. p. 332, 333.



gradually took roots and proved to be an important feature of the Mughal land-revenue system.<sup>39</sup> The relevant evidence indicates that by and large the practice appears to have continued during the first-half of the eighteenth century. But as the central authority gradually weakened in the second quarter of the century the transfers were most probably few and far between and the offices and the *jagirs* in certain cases tended to be hereditary.

The inference that the transfers of *jagirs* continued during the period under study is based on references about the *mahal-i-pai baqi*<sup>40</sup> and on evidence recording the actual transfer of *jagirs*. The *Siyaq Nama* contains a document entitled *tumar-i-mahal pai baqi* or the rent roll of the *jagirs* transferred in the middle of the year showing the proportionate shares of the *jagirdars* and the State in the revenue of the *jagirs* transferred in the middle of the year.<sup>41</sup> The inclusion of the detailed account of a number of transferred *jagirs* in the manual suggests that when the eighteenth century opened, the practice of the transfer of *jagirs* was still wide-spread. We read elsewhere that Nasir Khan was appointed the *Diwan* and *Amin* of the *mahal-i-pai-baqi* in Gujarat in 1131.<sup>42</sup> Still later, in 1146 AH, Muhammad Momin was appointed to the office of the *mahal-i-pai baqi* of the Sorath Sarkar.<sup>43</sup> It can, therefore, be safely inferred that the transfer of *jagirs* continued and that the officers dealing with transferred *jagirs* worked at the provincial as well as the *sarkar* level. The inference is further corroborated by casual evidence recording cases of the transfers of *jagirs* in various parts of the Empire.<sup>44</sup>

However, there is some evidence which points to the fact that in the second-quarter of the eighteenth century the offices and *jagirs* were held on much longer tenure and even tended to be hereditary. Since the accession of Rafi-ud-Darajat, the change of the monarch does not appear to have affected the fortunes of a large number of *jagirdars*. They continued to hold their *jagirs* as before and were confirmed in their assignments. The *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* records orders which were issued to the *Diwans* in the Empire under successive monarchs. According to these orders the *mahals* held by the *jagirdars* and the imperial *mansabdar* were to be confirmed on them. They were entitled to hold them as before and the

39. *Tuzk-i-Jahangiri* p. 4; *Selected Documents of Shahjahan's Reign* pp. 147, 150, 151, 58; *Nigar Nama-i-Nama-i-Munshi*, pp. 29, 30, 40; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 185, Also see Bernier, p. 23.

40. *Jagir* lands resumed and not yet assigned constituted the *mahal-i-pai baqi* or the *mahal* available for assignment. For the time being such a *mahal* was administered by an imperial officer.

41. *Siyaq Nama*, pp. 40-48.

42. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, II, p. 26.

43. *Ibid*, II, p. 165.

44. *Muntakhab-ul-lubab*, II, pp. 801, 802; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, II, pp. 99, 165, 166, 239.



*Diwan* was not to interfere with them on the pretext of requiring them to produce renewed *sanads*.<sup>45</sup> Thus successive confirmatory orders indicate that the transfer or resumption of *jagirs* did not take place in the case of large number of *jagirdars* under these monarchs. As a matter of fact there is some evidence to show that in certain cases the offices and *jagirs* tended to be hereditary.<sup>46</sup> With the growing anarchy that followed the invasion of Nadir Shah, the stage was soon reached when a claim based on the power and capacity to hold an office or *jagir* had greater validity than one based on an order of assignment. In these developments we can trace the extinction of a large number of *jagirdars* as well as the emergence of petty principalities. The holders of these assignments and offices treated their rights to offices and *jagirs* as permanent and hereditary.

### Extent of the Imperial Control

We have already mentioned that a *jagirdar* held a definite rank in the imperial service and his right was limited to the collection of the amount assigned to him against his salary for his rank. His position as a *jagirdar*, therefore, precluded any pretence of exercising powers and privileges which might contravene the imperial regulations. On the other hand, there is sufficient evidence to show that the internal administration of a *jagir*, in all its essentials, was carried on in accordance with the imperial regulations which covered land-revenue as well as general administration within a *jagir*.

The available evidence relating to the reigns of Akbar and Aurangzeb gives some insight into the nature of the control exercised by the government. It appears that a *jagirdar* was required to assess land-revenue in accordance with the *dastur*<sup>47</sup> and even in matters of collection he had to forego a part of his claim in case remission was granted by the Emperor on account of damage to crops.<sup>48</sup> Even the arrears for the preceding years could be remitted by the Emperor and a *jagirdar* had to comply with the royal order.<sup>49</sup> Imperial regulations pertaining to affairs other than land-revenue were

45. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, II, pp. 22, 23, 27, 30.

46. *Maasir-ul-Umara*, I, part II, pp. 58, 67, *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, II, pp. 103, 381.

47. As early as the 27th year of Akbar's reign it was laid down that the *jagirdars* should collect the land-revenue and other taxes in accordance with the *dastur*. See *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 381.

48. In 993 A.H./1585 A.D. Akbar granted remissions in the provinces of Allahabad, Awadh and Delhi. The remissions in the *khalisa* lands amounted to 70, 74, 762 *dams*. Abul Fazl adds that the remissions granted in *iqtaas* can be calculated accordingly, (*Akbar Nama*, III p. 463. See also *Akbar Nama*, III pp. 494, 534).

49. In 1088 A.H./1672 A.D. Aurangzeb issued the orders to the provincial *Diwan* of Gujarat that the arrears for the past in the *khalisa* and *jagir mahals* should be taken as remitted and the ryots should not be oppressed for the arrears (*Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 290).



equally applicable to the *jagir* lands,<sup>50</sup> and the provincial *Diwan* communicated the contents of the royal order to the *jagirdar* and his agents.<sup>51</sup>

The internal administration of *jagir* lands was supervised and controlled in more than one way. The important agency to control the *jagirdars* were the *sawanih nigars* (news-writers) who were required to report the activities of the *jagirdars* and the conditions that prevailed in the *jagirs*.<sup>52</sup> If a *jagirdar* was reported to be oppressive or if he failed to conform to the imperial regulations he was liable to punishment.<sup>53</sup> The punishment involved the transfer or resumption of the *jagir* or the imposition of a fine.<sup>54</sup> Strictly speaking, the power and authority of the *jagirdar*, unless he held the office of the *faujdari* as well, was limited to the assessment and collection of land-revenue. The assessment and collections were made in accordance with the imperial regulations. That the imperial regulations were in vogue even in the first-half of the eighteenth century is shown by an order issued by a *jagirdar* to his *Faujdar* and *Amin*. It said that the *Faujdar* and the *Amin* should see to it that none of the cesses remitted by the Court were collected by any person entrusted with the work of collection.<sup>55</sup>

① Besides this, the organisation of the local administration served as a check on the working of the land-revenue administration within a *jagir*. Whereas the right to assess and collect the land-revenue vested in the *jagirdar* the executive authority vested in the *Faujdar*, who was also associated with land-revenue administration and exercised general supervision over its working within a *jagir*.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, there were some other local officers (*ahl-i-khidmat*) who were appointed by the Court. They were required to report those activities of the agents of the *jagirdar* which interfered with their authority.<sup>57</sup> Among these officers were the *Chaudhari*, the *Qanungo* and the *Qazi*. They held their appointments from the Court even within the *jagirs*.

50. In 989 A.H. 1581 A.D. the *jagirdars* along with the other officers of the government were directed to maintain records about the inhabitants of the village within their jurisdiction, noting their names and professions. They were also instructed to see that none was allowed to live without engaging in some profession or another. See *Akbar Nama*, III pp. 346, 347. We read elsewhere in the *Akbar Nama* that the *jagirdars* were required to report about *jagirs*. See *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 381.

51. *Selected Waqai of the Deccan*, I, p. 46.

52. *Ruqqaat-i-Alamgiri*, pp. 11, 15, 37.

53. Hasan Beg, the *Jagirdar* of *Chakla Kora*, was reported to be oppressive and the inhabitants of the *chakla* made constant complaints against them. Aurangzeb issued orders to resume his *jagir* without making an alternative assignment (see *Ruqqaat-i-Alamgiri*, p. 43). It was reported that Shah Beg Khan did not maintain the contingent as required by the regulations. Shahjahan issued an order to Aurangzeb that the parganas held in *tiyul* by Shah Beg Khan should be seized and that he should be sent to the Court (see *Ruqqaat-i-Alamgiri*, p. 93).

54. *Ruqqaat-i-Alamgiri*, p. 37.

55. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, f. 9a.

56. See *Faujdar and Faujdari under the Mughals*, *Medieval India Quarterly*, IV, pp. 22-35.

57. *Nigar Nama-i-Mansbi*, p. 127; cf. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, 37b, 38a.



which were held by the *Faujدارs* of the same administrative units.<sup>58</sup> An examination of the functions attached to these offices will show that, in the first place, they served as a check on the agents of the *jagirdars* and secondly, they furnished the necessary information to the Revenue Ministry which enabled it to keep an eye on the working of the land-revenue administration within the *jagirs*. Although the *Qazi* was primarily an officer of the judiciary but he was also associated in some measure with the local land-revenue administration. It was he who attested the documents dealing with the transfer of land. Moreover, all the important revenue accounts had to be verified and attested by him before they were forwarded to higher authorities or were kept as local record.<sup>59</sup> The *Chaudhari* and the *Qanungo* were, on the other hand, *pargana* officers who were directly associated with the land-revenue administration. Their offices were more or less hereditary, and they maintained important revenue papers containing all the necessary information about agrarian conditions in the *pargana* including a record of the rights and interests in land.<sup>60</sup> While the *jagirs* were transferable or even might be resumed as *khalisa*, the offices of the *Chaudhari* and the *Qanungo* remained unaffected by such changes. Thus the continuity of the local records was maintained and these were also available to an officer deputed to gather first hand information about a *jagir*. Moreover, it was a well-established practice that the *jagirdars* should submit every year the *hal-i-hasil*<sup>61</sup> figures for the current and preceding years. They had to give an undertaking that the figures furnished by them were correct and that they would be accountable for any discrepancy discovered in them.<sup>62</sup> They also submitted the *muwazana-i-dah sala*.<sup>63</sup> Thus the Revenue Minister could obtain the revenue statement from different sources and know exactly the conditions that prevailed within the *jagir* lands.

Under Aurangzeb the *jagir* lands still formed the bulk of the imperial territory. Nevertheless, there were indications of a definite change in the nature and character of the assignment system. The system was evolved with the object of restricting the power and pretensions of the landed aristocracy and of providing the State with an efficient imperial service, paid in the form of assignment. By the close of the seventeenth century, however, the smooth working of the system was seriously impaired and it had begun

58. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 37b, 38a ; 41b, 42a ; 44ab cf. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, pp. 83, 90, 91, 140.

59. *Nigar Nama-i-Munshi*, p. 27.

60. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri* f. 8a ; *Studies in the Land Revenue History of Bengal* p. 164, 165 ; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mahdi Ali Khan*, f. 66a ; *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 224, 225, 228, 229.

61. *hal-i-hasil* : assessed land revenue for the current year.

62. *Selected Documents of Shahjahan's Reign*, pp. 88, 89, 90, 164 ; *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 327.

63. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, I, p. 327.



to show signs of becoming an institution which tended to be static and failed to adapt itself to the changed political and agrarian conditions. The efficiency of the imperial service suffered ; the *jagirdars* were faced with financial distress and were disgruntled. The resources of the Empire were almost exhausted by providing *jagirs* to the *mansabdars* who were newly recruited.<sup>64</sup>

Thus when Aurangzeb died the institution of *jagirdari* was faced with a number of developments which constituted a serious threat to the stability of the institution. The glaring contradictions in the assignment system revealed themselves in the form of an overwhelming increase in the number of *mansabdars*, an equal increase in the *mansabs* held by the old servants, paralleled by the corresponding scarcity of available assignments. The inflated *jama* and the keen competition among the *mansabdars* of the old families (*khanah zadan*) and the new class of claimants to *mansabs* and *jagirs* were the logical corollaries of the first two developments. During the ten or twelve years that followed the death of Aurangzeb and the accession of Muhammad Shah these tendencies, which threatened the break-down of the *jagirdari* system, continued to operate in full strength and were even accentuated. These developments coupled with the weakening of the central authority accelerated the process of disintegration and by the time of Nadir Shah's invasion the system had suffered almost a complete break-down. Although nominal *mansabs* continued to be granted they seldom carried with them the corresponding assignments. Recruitment on cash basis became more and more common. Thus the *jagirdari* system, as it had developed under the Great Mughals, ceased to function. Whether it continued to function in a modified form or gave place to some other institution in the newly carved out principalities in the provinces of the Deccan, Bengal, Bihar and Awadh may be a useful subject of investigation for those engaged in the study of land-revenue administration under the provincial dynasties. For the present it would suffice to examine the evidence relating to the last phase of the Mughal administration which corroborates our inferences mentioned above.

As early as 1691 A.D. the system was faced with the problem of providing *jagirs* to an ever increasing number of *mansabdars*, although the number of available *jagirs* was very small.<sup>65</sup> This crisis in the *jagirdari* system seems to have continued undiminished during the remaining years of Aurangzeb's reign and perhaps it was accentuated. Our inference is based on the fact that on accession Bahadur Shah was unable to provide

64. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, pp. 602, 603, 396, 397, 411, 412 ; cf *Ruqqaat-i-Alamgiri*, p. 7. In reply to a request made for alternative assignment the Emperor pointed out that

very few *jagirs* were available for assignment and the number of those seeking *jagirs* was very large. As such it was not possible to make arrangements for alternative assignments.

65. *Nuskha-i-Dilkusha*, ff. 169ab ; also see *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, pp. 396, 397, 411, 412.



a large number of nobles and *amirs* with *jagirs*. Unfortunately, his own policy of lavish awards of *mansabs* and increase in *mansabs* intensified the crisis still further. The author of the *Nuskha-i-Dilkusha*, recording the events of the first regnal year of Bahadur Shah, says that all the *mansabdars* of Aurangzeb's reign were granted increase in their *mansabs* and were honoured with titles. A large army had gathered around the Emperor. The princes, and the *Khan-i-Khanan*, and some of the *amirs* were assigned *jagirs* in Hindustan but a large number of the *amirs* could not be provided with *jagirs*. *Khan-i-Khanan* submitted to the Emperor a plan that the *watan* of the Rajputs should be brought under the imperial administration and distributed among the *amirs*. The Emperor, it appears, approved of the suggestions and left for Ajmer, ostensibly to pay homage to the shrine of Muin-uddin-Chishti, but really to take possession of the Rajputs' *jagirs*.<sup>66</sup>

The evidence suggests that the tendencies which were impairing the *jagirdari* system not only continued undiminished but were strengthened under the new sovereign. Our authorities agree that Bahadur Shah was by temperament affable and generous and had little aptitude for the dull details of administration.<sup>67</sup> The opening of his reign was marked by a lavish award of *mansabs* and increase in the *mansabs*. High and low *mansabdars* among the Hindus and the Muslims were raised to the ranks of 6,000 and 7,000 and were honoured with titles of *jang*, *malik*, *rai* and *raja*; consequently *mansabs* and titles lost their significance.<sup>68</sup>

The new sovereign failed to realise the implications of his policy of the lavish award of *mansabs*. In fact, he became the willing instrument of the deterioration in the *jagirdari* system whose condition had already become quite grave some two decades earlier. However, there were people who fully understood the implications of the new sovereign's generosity in awarding *mansabs* and of granting increase in the ranks without any reference to the availability of *jagirs*. They foresaw the complete breakdown of the system, if no steps were taken to improve the situation. They even made some vain attempts to arrest the process of disintegration in the very first year of Bahadur Shah's reign. The attempt at reform failed but it deserves to be examined in some detail as it presents the contemporary view of the situation in the *jagirdari* system.

66. *Nuskha-i-Dilkusha*, f. 169 ab; also see *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, pp. 396, 397, 411, 412.

67. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, p. 630. According to Khafi Khan, Bahadur Shah was so indifferent and badly informed about the State business that some impertinent persons calculated his date of accession in the phrase "Shah-i-bekhabar or the king without any information."

68. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II pp. 628, 629, 630; *Siyar-ul-Muntaakhabkibirin*, II; p. 380; *Nuskha-i-Dilkusha*, f. 169a. According to the author of *Abwal-ul-Khwaqin*, in the reigns of Bahadur Shah's ancestors the title of Khan was not obtained after a life long service and a large number of *mansabdars* died in the vain hope of obtaining the title of Khan. But Bahadur Shah was so generous that no *mansabdar* was left without the title of Khan. (*Abwal-ul-Khwaqin*, f. 45ab).



Ikhlas Khan, a man of great integrity and ability, was thoroughly dissatisfied with the policy of his sovereign. He was entrusted with the office of the *arzi-mukarrar*.<sup>69</sup> He noticed the generosity of the Emperor in awarding *mansabs* and granting increase in the ranks without examining the recipient's merits. He failed to reconcile himself to the policy of the Emperor and requested the *Jumlat-ul Mulk* to bring about some sort of order in the administration of the *jagirs*. In case no attempt was made to set things right, the resources of the Empire which were too meagre to keep pace with the generosity of the Emperor, could soon be exhausted, and the old servants of the Empire, enjoying some position and status, would be faced with unemployment. He therefore proposed that when the *yaddasht* about the *mansab* was put before the *Wazir* for his signature, before being submitted to the Emperor for the second time, the *Wazir* should sign it only after making the necessary enquiries about the birth, race, rank and status of the candidate in question. The *Wazir*, however, did not like to become unpopular ; consequently Ikhlas Khan was asked to make the necessary enquiries. The latter, in his turn, expressed his unwillingness to undertake the investigation. At last it was decided that Mustaad Khan alias Muhammad Saqi should be entrusted with the job. It was agreed that the following facts should be ascertained before the *yaddasht* was put up before the Emperor for the second time.

1. Whether the candidate, who applied for *mansab* for the first time, was qualified for the service of the Emperor.
2. The reason for the grant or increase in the *mansab*.
3. The nature and importance of the recommendation.
4. Whether the *mansabdar* had received more increase in the *mansab* than he deserved.

It was also laid down that nobody's *mansab* should be increased before he had completed the term specified for promotion in the rank. It was felt that these enquiries would take considerable time. After the completion of the enquiries Mustaad Khan was required to write "in order" on the *yaddasht*,<sup>70</sup> prepared for the grant or for increase in the *mansab*.

An examination of the evidence referred to above will reveal that the contemplated reforms did not propose any reduction in *mansabs* or suspension of fresh recruitments for a limited period. Perhaps such drastic reforms could not be even suggested as they would have alienated and infuriated the all-powerful class of *mansabdars* which although originally created to serve the State was by now controlling the destiny of the State itself. The attempt at reform was, therefore, limited to the formulation of such

69. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, pp. 628, 629. Ikhlas Khan was appointed in the year 1119 A.H. 1707 A.D.

70. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, pp. 628, 629.



regulations as would put considerable restrictions on fresh recruitment, disqualify the undeserving and slow down the rate of increase in the *mansabs*. But the government had become so weak that it could not implement even these moderate measures of reform. We have noted that the *Wazir* had shirked from personally implementing the proposed reforms. Unfortunately, there were forces which militated against the contemplated reform which had their supporters within the palace itself. *Mustaad Khan* was rendered quite ineffective and could not implement the proposed reforms. Most often, we are told, the *yaddasht* was signed by *Mustaad Khan* without completing the enquiry as a result of the pressure brought upon him by the Emperor's wives and other court favourites. Thus the business of the State, *Khafi Khan* points out, was transacted in contravention of the regulations and Emperor's signature lost its significance.<sup>71</sup>

As pointed out earlier the *jagirs* were not available for a large number of *amirs* as early as the first year of *Bahadur Shah's* reign. The conquest and annexation of *Rajputana* was apparently undertaken to accommodate these *amirs* but the plan could not be successfully implemented. The attempt to check the unprecedented increase in the number of *mansabdar* and an almost equal increase in the ranks of the old *mansabdars* met with complete failure. The grant of fresh *mansab* and increase in existing *mansabs* continued and this practice was followed without any consideration of the availability of *jagirs*. Such administrative policy could lead to only one result ; that the *mansabs* in a large number of cases tended to be nominal and bore little or no relation to the assignment of corresponding *jagirs*. Our authorities perhaps refer to this situation in the *jagirdari* system when they state that ranks and titles lost their significance.

It appears that the obligation of the *jagirdars* towards the maintenance of the animals in the royal stables had become a heavy burden in the reign of *Aurangzeb*. The entire income from the *jagirs* could not cover one-half or two-third of the expenditure necessary for the maintenance of the animals in the royal stables ; consequently the *jagirdars* and their agents suffered great hardship. At the suggestion of *Khan-i-Khanan*, it was laid down during *Shah Alam's* reign that in future when the *jagirs* were assigned to *masabdars*, the amount payable for the maintenance of animals in the royal stables, should be reduced from the *jama* or *dams* showing the estimated income from their assignments. This reform, we are told, removed the hardship caused to the *mansabdars* and their agents and it almost amounted to the remission of tax to the *jagirdars*.<sup>72</sup> Incidentally, the evidence under reference suggests that the highly inflated nature of *jama* was given due recognition and as such the nominal deductions from the *jama* did not really affect the income of the *jagirdars*.

71. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 629.

72. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, pp. 602, 603.



Farrukh Siyyar's weak and wavering character, the circumstances in which he ascended the imperial throne and the lust of the Sayyid brothers for power generated bitter jealousies among the nobles and converted the imperial Court into a hot-bed of intrigues and machinations. With the passage of time the new sovereign degenerated into the first puppet of the Mughal imperial line. He became a tool in the hands of the intriguing nobles of one party or the other. Qutub-ul-Mulk Abdullah Khan, primarily a soldier, was hardly qualified to fill the high office of the *wizarat*. He gave himself up to a life of self-indulgence, had little interest in the details of administration and neglected his business. Gradually, the power passed into the hands of his corrupt *Diwan*, Ratan Chand. Under such circumstances, the grant of *mansabs* and *jagirs* was actuated more by political motives than by other considerations such as conformity with administrative procedures or due regard to the meritorious services rendered by the grantee. Corruption and nepotism prevailed and *jagirs* and *mansabs* were granted at one time as a measure of appeasement, and at others to maintain balance between the relative powers of the warring parties. For these reasons the pace of the disintegration of the *jagirdari* system which had begun in the closing years of Aurangzeb's reign became more rapid and more pronounced in the reign of Farrukh Siyyar.

According to the author of the *Ahwal-ul-Khwaqin* the majority of *mansabdars* who did not deserve the rank of 500 had been granted the rank of 5000 and 7000 and had acquired vast *jagirs*. But if summoned to serve in an emergency they proved completely useless for military service. Moreover, the descendants of the old nobles suffered for want of favour and could hardly defray their daily expenses.<sup>73</sup> Incidentally, we also learn that almost all the *khalisa* lands had been assigned as *jagir*. Similar developments are recorded in another contemporary authority, the *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*.<sup>74</sup> The Hindus, the Khwajasaras and the Kashmiris, we are told by Khafi Khan, had captured high *mansabs* by force and fraud. They had succeeded in obtaining *jagirs* which yielded the maximum revenue at the cost of other sections of the class of *mansabdars*, and it had become difficult for others to get *jagirs*. Inayatullah Khan<sup>75</sup> made an attempt to introduce the necessary reforms. He reported the matter to the Emperor and proposed that after scrutinising

73. *Ahwal-ul-Khwaqin*, ff. 182 ab, 183a. The passage records the state of affairs which was revealed to Nizam-ul-Mulk when he examined the paper on taking charge of the *wizarat* in the first regnal year of Muhammad Shah. It is obvious that these developments must have taken place during the preceding reigns. The reign of Jahandar Shah was short-lived and he had not been successful in removing all his rivals. As such the evidence under reference may be ascribed to the reign of Farrukh Siyyar.

74. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 775.

75. Inayatullah Khan was appointed *Diwan-i-tan* and *khalisa* on the 12th April 1717 and given the rank of 4000 *zat* and 3000 *sawars*. *Later Mughals*, Irvine, I, p. 334.



the *awarijah*<sup>76</sup> and *tauji*<sup>77</sup>, the Hindus and others who were not qualified to hold their *mansabs* should be deprived of them. Ratan Chand and others who held positions of authority in the Revenue Ministry strongly resented the proposed reforms. They referred the matter to *Qutub-ul-Mulk* who did not allow the contemplated reforms to be implemented. On the other hand, all the Hindus, on account of the reimposition of *jizya* and the proposal for decrease in the *mansabs*, became hostile to Inayatullah Khan. Because of these bickerings, the agreement which had been reached between the *Qutub-ul-Mulk* and Inayatullah Khan did not work and they became bitter against each other.

The evidence summarised above deserves careful examination as it really records the disappearance of the essentials of the *jagirdari* system and the complete domination of the State by the *mansabdars*. It shows unprecedented increase<sup>78</sup> in the *mansabs* without corresponding increase in the efficiency and ability of the *mansabdars* to fulfil their obligations. In other words, the State was not in a position to compel the *jagirdars* to fulfil the obligations which were the essential condition of the award of *jagirs*. This applied to the majority of *mansabdars*. It appears that a new class had entered the ranks of the *mansabdars* who had little skill and prowess as warriors. They were the Kashmiris, the Khwajasaras and the Hindus. They had served at the imperial Court as *mutasaddis* or clerks and had acquired high *mansabs* and rich *jagirs* by manipulation and intrigue. The development was unfortunate as these *mansabdars* neither possessed

76. An abstract account of the receipts and disbursements of the *jagirs* and other lands of the *suba* showing the total income of the *sarkars* and *parganas* together with the details of the revenue from each village.

77. A record which contained entries regarding payment of the salary ; also the revenue accounts showing the name of each payee of the revenue together with the amounts paid and the arrears.

78. The general statement in our authorities that the great increase in the number of *mansabs* and the lavish award of *mansabs* became a prominent feature of the *mansabdari* system since Bahadur Shah's accession is supported and corroborated by the rise in the ranks of individual *mansabdars*.

Bahadur Shah :

- (a) Munir Khan was granted the title of Khan-i-Khanan Bahadur Zafar Jang and his rank raised from 1590 to 7000 *zat*, 7000 *sawars*. (*Later Mughals*, II, p. 36.
- (b) Asad Khan was given the rank of 8000 *zat* 8000 *sawars do-asph sib asph*. Zulfiqar Khan, his son, the rank of 7000 *zat* 7000 *sawars* (*Later Mughals*, Irvine, II, pp. 38,39).
- (c) Nizam-ul-Mulk was given the title of Khan-i-Khanan Bahadur with a rank of 7000 *zat* 7000 *sawars*.

*Jahandar Shah's reign :*

Rai Man, the woman who had given alarm when an attempt was made to assassinate Jahandar Shah and had bravely attacked the assailants and slain one of them, received for this good service the title of Raza Bahadur Rustam Hind and the rank of 5,000 *zat* (*Later Mughals*, Irvine, I, p. 281).



the necessary qualifications nor were they willing to fulfil the military obligations imposed upon the *mansabdars*. In fact, they may be aptly described as the *mansabdars* and *jagirdars* at large who did little or nothing in return for the money they extorted from the State. Thirdly, the new class acquired the *mansabs* and *jagirs* at the cost of those who were descendants of the old servants of the Mughal Empire, and who had a brilliant record of prowess and skill in the art of warfare and equally commendable records of loyal services rendered to the State. In the keen competition the descendants of the old *mansabdars* lost the position of power and prestige to the new-comers, and remained without *mansabs* and *jagirs* and were reduced to extreme poverty. This naturally caused discontent and dissatisfaction in the people who were willing and able to serve the Empire. We can also note that even at this stage an attempt at reform was made but met with its usual fate and could not be implemented.

But the most important development was the assignment of the *khalisa* lands as *jagirs*. What really happened can be easily visualised. With the increase in the power and position of the nobility and the *mutasaddis* the demand for *jagirs* became more vociferous. They refused to be content with the grant of nominal mansabs, as most probably they had been in the reign of Bahadur Shah, but clamoured for the assignment of *jagirs* against the *mansabs* granted to them. But the *jagirs* were not available. The ingenious device of making assignment of *khalisa* lands was proposed. The weak Emperor, always a puppet in the hands of one party or the other, ultimately yielded to their demand. The Emperor resorted to making assignments on the *mahals* set apart as *khalisa* in order to meet the claims of the *mansabdars*, and within a short time almost the entire *khalisa* lands passed into the hands of *jagirdars*. It was an unusual development in the administrative history of the Mughal Empire, and amounted to the virtual surrender of the rights of the State to the *mansabdars*. Thus the class which had been created to serve and support the State became an enormous and unprofitable burden and later usurped the right of the State. The inherent contradictions in the *mansabdari* system were fully revealed ; it served to destroy the State which had created the system.

*Farrukh Siyyar :*

- (a) Muhammad Murad Khan was appointed as *Mir Tuzuk* with a rise of 500 in rank making him 3000 *zat* in Jan., 1718. In March 1718 he received the rank of 5000 *zat* 2000 *sawars*. In May 1718, he was raised to 6000 *zat* 5000 *sawars*. In December 1718 he was promoted to the rank of 7000 *zat*, 7000 *sawars* 4000 *do asbah si asbah*. The best *jagirs* in Gujrat, Delhi and Agra provinces were allotted to him (Irvine, I, . 340, 344, 364).
- (b) Ratan Chand, in 1714, was created Raja with a rank 2000 *zat* (Irvine I, p. 291). In May 1720 he was promoted to the rank of 5000 *zat* 5000 *sawars* (Later Mughals, Irvine, II, p. 16).



Even the conversion of *khalisa* lands into *jagirs* could not solve the problem of the increase in the number of *mansabdars* and the scarcity of available *jagirs*. The *mansabdars* who were required to serve directly under Emperor were, consequently, recruited on cash salaries till *jagirs* were available for them. The Emperor Farrukh Siyyar, we are told, at the suggestion of Lutf-Ullah Sadiq<sup>79</sup>, issued the order that the *padshahi*<sup>80</sup> *mansabdars* holding the rank of 20 to 900 and *walashahi*<sup>81</sup> *mansabdars* holding the rank of 7000 should be paid at the rate of Rs. 50/- per month till they were provided with *jagirs*. The *walashahi mansabdars*, who had proved their loyalty and prowess, had not been paid for ten to twelve months. A large number of them had been serving in the hope of getting *jagirs*. Orders were all of a sudden issued for their dismissal. The *Bakhshis* told them that their services were terminated.<sup>82</sup>

The last attempt to save the system from complete breakdown was made by Nizam-ul-Mulk when he assumed the office of *wizarat* in October 1721. He examined the records and papers in the Revenue Ministry and the revelation of the truth shocked him. The results of his enquiry were brought to the notice of the Emperor who authorised him to take the necessary steps for restoring order in the administration of *jagir* lands. Nizamul Mulk's proposals for reform may be summed up as follows :

1. The ranks of the old nobility should be increased.
2. The *mansabs* of those who had not acquired them according to their personal merits should be decreased.
3. The *mahals* earmarked as *khalisa* in the previous reigns should be resumed.
4. The *jagirs* in which collections could only be made by employing force or threat of force should be assigned to powerful nobles and *tiyuls* in which collections could be made without much difficulty should be assigned to smaller and weaker *mansabdars*.<sup>83</sup>

79. He joined the imperial service in the reign of Bahadur Shah but fell into disfavour under Jahandar Shah. He was appointed the *Diwan-i-Khalisa* under Farrukh Siyyar, held the office of Khan-i-Saman in the reign of Muhammad Shah, and died in the reign of Ahmad Shah (*Maasir-ul-Umara*, III part, I, p. 178).

80. *Mansabdars* who joined the imperial service after the accession of the reigning sovereign.

81. Most trusted troops of the reigning sovereign who had been attached to his person and served under him while he was still only a prince.

82. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* : II, p. 769; *Siyar-ul-Mutaakhhbirin*, II p. 405. According to the author of the *Siyar-ul-Mutaakhhbirin* the order for recruitment was issued in the beginning of the fifth regnal year. The majority of recruits held the rank of 20 to 900. It does not specify the *padshahi* and *walashahi mansabdars* separately.

83. *Ahwal-ul-Khawaqin*, ff. 182 ab, 183a. *Shab Nama-i-Munawar-ul-Kalam*, ff. 8ba.



The contemplated reforms raised high hopes in certain quarters<sup>84</sup> and it was expected that administrative stability, which had been seriously impaired since the death of Aurangzeb, would be restored. But soon these hopes were belied and the *Wazir* met with stiff opposition from such persons as Samsam-ud-Daula and Haider Quli Khan. Those who had vested interests as well as the professional intriguers at the Court soon alienated the Emperor from the able and well-meaning *Wazir*. The Emperor was induced to humiliate Nizam-ul-Mulk who was forced to leave Delhi in December 1723, and within a few months reached Malwa.<sup>85</sup> The last chance to save the *jagirdari* system and the Empire was lost and soon the inevitable came to pass. By the middle of the eighteenth century the system had ceased to be a living organisation. One seldom got an assignment, we are told by Anand Ram Mukhlis. Even if the assignment was made he could not obtain possession of his assigned *jagir*.<sup>86</sup>

### Section III

#### THE MADAD-MAASH LANDS

The Muslim rulers of India granted rent free lands to men of piety and learning, and to persons belonging to noble families who had no other means of earning their livelihood. The Mughals continued the practice of granting subsistence allowance to the pious, the learned, the poor and the needy and to the Shaikhs, Sayyids and the Irani and Turani women.<sup>87</sup> Such a subsistence allowance could be granted in cash or in the form of a grant of land. The subsistence allowance in land was known as *madad-maash* or *milk*.<sup>88</sup> The two types of grant were covered by the general term *siyurghal*.<sup>89</sup>

*Madad-maash* was thus a grant of land made in recognition of the need, piety, learning or family (especially Shaikh or Sayyid) of the recipient. (According to Abul Fazl persons belonging to four classes were eligible for the grant of *madad-maash* lands. First, those who were seekers after the truth and who had renounced the world; secondly persons who strove to suppress sensual and carnal desires and had chosen a life of self-abnegation and self-effacement; thirdly the needy and the poor who could

84. *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, ff. 131ab.

85. *Ahwal-ul-Khawaqin* f. 183, a; *Siyar-ul-Mutaakibkhirin*, II, P. 456; *Later Mughals*, Irvine, II pp. 131, 132, 134, 136, 137.

86. *Mirat-ul-Istilah*, f. 64b.

87. *Ain-i-Akbari* I, p. 141.

88. *Ibid*, I, p. 140.

89. *Ibid*, I, p. 140. "The word *Siyurghal* which is of Mongol origin literally means a favour or a grant. Originally it denoted the documents under which a *tiyul* was granted" (Ency. of Islam, Vol. IV, p. 800).



not earn their livelihood on account of physical disability or lack of material resources ; and lastly persons claiming to be of noble birth, who foolishly deemed it below their dignity or social status to follow any trade or profession.<sup>90</sup>

### Nature of the Grant

It appears that grants could be made, renewed, extended, curtailed or resumed at the pleasure of the Emperor.<sup>91</sup> But in actual practice hereditary rights of property in land were conferred subject to periodical verification, confirmation or renewal of the grant to the heirs of a grantee.<sup>92</sup> Some of the *farmans* specifically stated that the grant was made to the grantee and his descendants.<sup>93</sup> It appears that the verification or confirmation was not annual but periodical.<sup>94</sup> Another important feature of these grants was that in an overwhelming majority of cases the grants were in the nature of *maafi* i.e. exemption from land-revenue and all other taxes termed as *hutuq-i-diwani* and *awarizat-i-sultani*.<sup>95</sup> (Thus the *madad-maash* grants were generally rent-free and the grantee was entitled to appropriate the produce of the soil or the revenue from the land and could lease out the land to the cultivator.) But the possibility for the assessment of *madad-maash* lands cannot be altogether ruled out and in fact we have evidence that *madad-maash* lands were sometimes subject to assessment. The earliest evidence about the assessment of *madad-maash* lands dates back to the year 1058 A.H. 1648-49 A.D. in Shahjahan's reign. We learn from a document, preserved in the U.P. State Archives, Allahabad, that 900 *bighas* of land were granted to one Begum Birlas earlier in the reign of Shahjahan. In 1058 A.H./1648 A.D. out of the total grant 476 *bighas* and one *biswa* of cultivated land was assessed at the rate of annas eight per *bigha* as was the customary rate in the *pargana*. Later a *parwana* granting remission of Rs. 56/ was issued. The remaining balance of the revenue demand amounting to Rs. 188/6/- was remitted in the year 1060 A.H./1649-50 A.D.

90. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, pp. 140, 141.

91. *Ibid*, I, pp. 140, 141.

92. *Allahabad Documents*, 167, 169, 173, 175, 154.

93. *Ibid*, 9, 165, 172, 174, 176, 178.

94. *Ibid*, 161.

95. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 39b ; the list of the remitted taxes is given in *The Allahabad Documents* No. 60 and in a copy of Akbar's *farman* preserved in the Research Library, Department of History, Muslim University, Aligarh. They were : *qunligha* (process fee), *peshkash* (presents) *jaribana* (rate imposed for defraying the charges for measurement of land), *zabitana* (fee pay to the collector) *muharrirana* (fee for sealing documents), *daroghana* (superintendence charges) *begar* (employing anyone without remuneration), *sbikar* (hunting fee), *dab nimi* (tax of five percent), *qanungoi* (fee of officers incharge of land tenures) and *zabt-i-barsala* (cost of annual settlement). Also see *Selected Documents of Shahjahan's Reign*. p. 190.



The evidence just summarised deserves consideration. We do not know the special circumstances which were responsible for the assessment of a part of the *madad-maash* land. Nor have the reasons for partial and subsequent total remissions been recorded. But the evidence clearly establishes the fact that under particular conditions, not specified in the document under reference, the rent-free grant of land was liable to partial assessment, and that if and when the conditions permitted the assessed revenue or a part of it could be remitted.<sup>1</sup>

Again we learn from a document relating to the same reign that *aima* lands of village Bhusra and village Haibatpur were assessed at Rs. 25/- and Rs. 5/- respectively.<sup>96</sup> We learn elsewhere that the *aimadars* of Amethi had to pay the customary land-revenue<sup>97</sup> amounting to Rs. 10,015/-. The *aimadars* of Haidargarh, Satrakh, Ibrahimpur and Anbola *parganas* had also to pay a fixed land-revenue.<sup>98</sup> It appears that entire *parganas* were granted as *madad-maash* and that such lands were subject to the assessment of land-revenue. We can also infer that certain types of *madad-maash* lands had acquired more or less the same character as *zamindari* lands. But the fact that they were still referred to as *madad-maash* and *aima* lands suggests that the rates of assessment for such lands were most probably lighter than those for the *zamindari* lands. In fact the inference is supported by the evidence just quoted. Reference has been made earlier that an entire village was assessed at Rs. 25/- while the grantee of another had to pay only Rs. 5/- as land revenue. Again it appears that the entire *pargana* of Amethi was assessed at Rs. 10,000/- or so which could hardly be the usual land-revenue for a *pargana*.

[ Lastly, it is to be noted that the holders of *madad-maash* lands enjoyed the right to sell or transfer land as gifts in the same way as the zamindars did. The inference is based on evidence relating to the reign of Aurangzeb and subsequent period. We cannot therefore assert with any degree of certainty that the holders of *madad-maash* land enjoyed the right of sale and transfer under Akbar and his two immediate successors. Thus for all practical purposes the *madad-maash* holders were owners of land granted to them and were not very different from the small *zamindars* as far as their rights and interests in the land were concerned. However, the majority of *madad-maash* grantees enjoyed the unique economic immunity from all heads of taxation. It appears that quite a large number of grantees had to pay the land-revenue like the *zamindars*, but most probably preferential treatment was accorded to them and lighter rates of assessment were charged against their lands.

96. *Allahabad Documents*, No. 1.

97. *Ibid*, 218; dated 1179 A.H./1764 A.D.

98. *Ibid*, No. 218; dated 1179 A.H./1764 A.D.



### Type of Lands Granted as *Madad-Maash*

The *madad-maash* lands could be granted within the *jagir* area,<sup>99</sup> the *mahal* earmarked as *khalisa*,<sup>100</sup> or it could be granted out of the land described as waste land excluded from the *jama*.<sup>101</sup> It was also a well-established practice to separate the *madad-maash* lands from the *khalisa* and the *jagir mahals* and to consolidate them in order to avoid any dispute at the time of measurement.<sup>102</sup> The idea of separating the *madad-maash* lands from the *khalisa* and the *jagir mahals* was for the first time mooted by Akbar.<sup>103</sup> The grants of the *madad-maash* lands out of the *khalisa* and the *jagir* lands were few and far between. Only a few documents indicate that the *madad-maash* grant was made out of the *khalisa* lands, especially under Akbar.<sup>104</sup> Gradually the practice tended towards the grant of the *madad-maash* lands out of land lying waste and excluded from *jama*, and by the first half of the eighteenth century it had become a well established administrative practice.<sup>105</sup> Under Akbar the proportion of cultivated and cultivable land granted as *madad-maash* was fixed in the ratio<sup>106</sup> of 1:1. It appears that the ratio indicated in the *Ain* served only as a standard and not as a rigid regulation and variations according to the local conditions were admissible.<sup>107</sup> The area of a *madad-maash* grant by virtue of a single *farman* varied from 15 *bighas* to more than four thousand *bighas*.<sup>108</sup> Generally the larger grants of the *madad-maash* lands ranged from 500 to 1000 *bighas*. But it would be wrong to assume that there was any ceiling over a grant of more than one thousand *bighas* of land, as has been suggested by some scholars. In fact there is evidence to show that grant made by virtue of a single *farman* exceeded the area of four thousand *bighas*.<sup>109</sup>

99. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 40ab.

100. Akbar's *Farman* (986 A.H.), *Allahabad Document*, No. 3, 156, 157, 162.

101. *Allahabad Documents* Nos. 156, 157, 159, 160, 162.

102. *Ibid* Nos. 10, 180, 160.

103. *Allahabad Documents*, No. 24.

104. Akbar's *Farman* dated 986 A.H. reveals that the entire grant was made out of the cultivable land included in the *jama*. The areas of the land tilled by the peasants and the land tilled by the grantees themselves are given in the *farman*. Sometimes a number of villages in a *pargana* were separated as *aima* villages and excluded from the *jama* (See *Siyaq Nama* pp. 33-39).

105. *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 157, 158, 159, 163; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 39a.

106. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 141.

107. *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 162; the document is dated the 14th year of Jahangir's reign; *Document* No. 296, dated 1004 A.H. records the grant of 39 *bighas*, 20 *bighas* cultivated, 9 *bighas* fallow.

108. *Allahabad Documents*, No. 154.

109. *Allahabad Documents*, No. 154, dated 12th regnal year of Shahjahan, 1049 A.H./1639-40 A.D.; also see *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 144, 180, 199, which record the grants of 1562 *bighas*, 3039 *bighas* and 2220 *bighas* respectively.



## Procedure for Grant

The procedure for the grant of the *madad-maash* lands can best be studied in some documents,<sup>110</sup> preserved in the U.P. State Archives Allahabad, and in the *Farhang-i-Kardani*.<sup>111</sup> It appears that in the first instance a report, *fard-i-haqiqat*,<sup>112</sup> stating a deserving case along with the necessary recommendation was submitted to the Imperial Court. After it had been received at the Court and duly recorded in the *siyaha*<sup>113</sup> it was presented to the Emperor. If the recommendation made in the report was approved by the Emperor he issued verbal orders for the grant of *madad-maash* land. The details of the grant, the name of the *Sadr* and the name of the *Waqiah Nigar* were recorded in the *yaddasht-i-waqiah*. After the completion of these entries the *Sadr* instructed that the *yaddasht* should be presented to the Emperor again. This process was known as *arz-i-mukarrar*. These formalities completed, the *Sadr* issued an order for the preparation of the *farman* for the grant of the *madad-maash* land approved by the Emperor. The *farman* specified the area of land granted as *madad-maash*, the name of the grantee and necessary instructions to the officers concerned to note the content of the *farman* and make over the possession of the land specified in the *farman* to the grantee. An account of the formalities, completed at the Court, and the details of the area of land granted as the *madad-maash*<sup>114</sup> was recorded on the back of the *farman* which was known as *zimm*. A *parwana* recapitulating the content of the *farman* was issued by the department of the *Sadr* and it bore his seal. The *parwana* made a reference to the content of the *farman* along with the date on which it was issued and directed the *Gumashtas*<sup>115</sup> and the *Karoris* to comply with the royal order.

## Verification, Confirmation and Renewal

The grant made as *madad-maash* was subject to periodical verification and confirmation by the office of the *Sadr*. It was the duty of the grantees to come to the office of the local *Sadr* and establish their claims by producing reliable witnesses who had to confirm that they were still alive, and that the land granted to them was in their possession and use. In case the *Sadr* was

110. *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 220, 226.

111. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 39a.

112. *Ibid*, f. 39a.

113. Most probably refers to *siyaha-i-waqai* or the register recording the proceedings and transactions at the Court.

114. It appears that under Akbar till the year 986 the details of the area of land granted as *madad-maash* were given in the text of the *farman*. See Akbar's *Farman* dated 986 A.H./1578 A.D. Department of History, Muslim University, Aligarh.

115. *Gumashta*: agent



satisfied on these points a new *sanad*<sup>116</sup> was issued to the grantees which confirmed their possession and use of the land granted to them.<sup>117</sup> This administrative practice was known as *tashiha*.<sup>118</sup> On the death of a grantee his or her heirs had to apply for the renewal and confirmation of the grant. They had to establish their claims to the grant by producing witnesses who attested the following :

- (1) that the claimants were alive and the land granted to the deceased was in their possession and use,
- (2) that they had no other means of livelihood,
- (3) that they possessed the verification and confirmation deeds of the former *Sadrs*.

If the *Sadr* was satisfied on these points he recommended the case for the renewal and confirmation of the grant in favour of the heirs of the deceased. The grant was thus confirmed and renewed by virtue of a *hasab-ul-hukm*.<sup>119</sup>

### The Department of the *Sadr*

The administration of the *madad-maash* lands was entrusted to a separate department under the *Sadr* or *Sadr-us-Sudur*. Under Akbar the department does not appear to have been a very elaborate one, but it was well-organised and was served by three important officials, namely a *Bitikchi* or secretary of distinguished ability, known as *Diwan-i-Saadat*, the *Qazi* and the *Mir Adl*. The *Sadr* was selected on the basis of certain qualifications. He was required to possess the ability to think clearly and a liberal outlook, so that he might not discriminate on the grounds of race or religion. A kind disposition and industrious habits were the other two qualifications necessary for the selection of the *Sadr*.<sup>120</sup>

### Power and Functions of the *Sadr*

The most important duty of the *Sadr* was to enquire into the conditions of the people and assess their needs so that they might be given suitable subsistence allowance. Moreover, he was required to organise

116. *Sanad*, an order or patent.

117. *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 2, 165, 168, 174, 176, 178.

118. *Ibid*, Nos. 168, 171, 175.

119. The present writer has examined some ten cases of renewal and confirmation in favour of the heirs of a deceased grantee. But of these ten nine were renewed and confirmed in compliance with a *hasab-ul-hukm*. Only in one case the grant was renewed and confirmed by virtue of a *farman* in which the area of land granted as *madad maash* exceeded four thousand bighas (*Allahabad Documents* No. 1547). It appears that generally the renewal and confirmation by *farman* was a special case as it involved considerably large area of land granted as *madad-maash*. For cases renewed and confirmed by *hasab-ul-hukm*; see *Allahabad Documents*, Nos. 9, 166, 168, 169, 170, 171, 173, 175.

120. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 140.



and run his department at the centre and in the provinces.<sup>121</sup> He was consulted by the Emperor about the grant of the *madad-maash* lands and the fact was recorded on the back of the *farman*.<sup>122</sup> Every important paper dealing with the grant of the *madad-maash* lands bore his seal. It appears that the *Qazis*, the provincial *Sadrs* and the *Mufts* were appointed on his recommendation and with his consent.<sup>123</sup> The *Sadr* issued a *parwana* endorsing an appointment in his department, the grant of the *madad-maash* lands, and renewal and confirmation of a grant.<sup>124</sup>

### Position

The *Sadrs* appointed during the early period of Akbar's reign seem to have occupied an important position and exercised a great deal of discretionary power in granting the *madad-maash* lands. However, the corruption and nepotism that prevailed in the department led to a change in Akbar's attitude concerning the power and position enjoyed by the *Sadr*. He began to take a personal interest in the administration of the department and consequently the *Sadr* was divested of many of the powers enjoyed by him. It was laid down that all those cases in which the grant exceeded five hundred *bighas* should be referred to the Emperor and that until these cases were approved by him the grants should be withheld. Later another regulation was issued which laid down that all grants exceeding one hundred *bighas* which were not specified in the *farmans* should be reduced to two-fifth of the original area and the balance of three-fifth should be resumed as *khalisa*. The *Sadr* was authorised to enforce the division of grants which were made to more than one person if one of the grantee died. The share of the deceased was to be resumed as *khalisa* till the heirs of the deceased were presented to the Emperor. The power of the *Sadr* was limited to the grant of fifteen *bighas* of land without the prior sanction of the Emperor. The *Sadr* was also authorised to verify, confirm or renew the old grants.<sup>125</sup> In the early years of the reign of Jahangir some of the former powers and privileges of the *Sadr* were restored. But they did not last long and after the seventeenth year of his reign the Emperor divested the *Sadr* of the power to make grants under his own authority.<sup>126</sup> Under Shahjahan the position remained theoretically the same, but Muswai Khan, the *Sadr*, transgressed the limits of his power. He was accused of having granted the *madad-maash* lands and *wazifah* to underserving persons without any reference to the Emperor.

121. *Ibid*, I, p. 141.

122. *Akbar's Farman*, dated 986 A.H.

123. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Suppl., p. 173.

124. *Ibid*, p. 173, *Allahabad Documents*, No. 55.

125. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 141.

126. *Central Structure of Mughal Empire*, Ibn-i-Hasan, pp. 272-273.



Shahjahan took a serious view of the matter and the *Sadr* was removed from the office.<sup>127</sup>

The office of the *Sadr-us-Sudur* continued to exist in the first-half of the eighteenth century. It appears that appointments in his department were made on his recommendation and the orders of appointment bore his seal.<sup>128</sup> A passage in *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* reveals that during the supremacy of Sayyid brothers, Mir Jumla, who held the office of the *Sadarat-i-kul*, had lost much of his power and authority. Ratan Chand exercised absolute powers even in matters relating to the Holy Law. Even the Qazis and other officers of the department of law and justice were appointed by him.<sup>129</sup>

### The Provincial *Sadr*

Akbar tried to curtail the power of the *Sadr-us-Sudur* and stop the corruption that was rampant in the department. He also paid adequate attention to the organisation of the department at the provincial and *pargana* levels. The *madad-maash* lands were separated from the *khalisa* and *jagir* lands and were directly administered by the provincial or regional *Sadrs* and the *pargana Qazis*. It appears that for some time the office of the *Sadr-us-Sudur* remained abolished and the administration of the *madad-maash lands* was entrusted to regional and provincial *Sadrs*.<sup>130</sup> However, the office of the *Sadr-us-Sudur* was revived later and the provincial *Sadr* continued to function throughout the seventeenth and the first-half of the eighteenth century. We do not know much about the functions and duties of the provincial *Sadr* under the Great Mughals. However, the functions and duties attached to the office of the provincial *Sadr*, as it existed in the first half of the eighteenth century, have been described in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*.<sup>131</sup> The Provincial *Sadr*, was appointed by virtue of a *sanad* bearing the seal of *Sadr-us-Sudur*. He held a *zat* and a *sawar* rank. The office carried with it a conditional rank of 50 *zat* and 10 *sawars*. The *Qazis*, the *Muhtasibs*,<sup>132</sup> the *Imams*,<sup>133</sup> the *Mutawallis*<sup>134</sup> of tombs and the *Moazzins*<sup>135</sup> served under him and received their letters of appointment from his office. The *sanads* relating to *madad-maash*, *wazifah* and *rozinah* were submitted to him for verification and confirmation. Papers relating to the resumption of the *madad-maash* lands bore his seal and signatures.

127. *Central Structure of the Mughal Empire*, Ibn-i-Hasan, p. 275; *Badshah Nama*, II, 365, 366

128. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp., p. 173.

129. *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab*, II, p. 843.

130. *Akbar Nama*, III, p. 372.

131. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supplement p. 173.

132. *Mutawalli* : An administrator or prosecutor of any religious charitable foundation.

133. *Imam* : One who leads the prayers.

134. *Moazzin* : The public crier who calls the people to prayers by a proclamation from a minaret or tower of a mosque.

135. *Muhtasib* : An officer in the police department who examined weights and measures and provisions and prevented gambling and drinking, etc.



*Mutawalli*

The *madad-maash* lands at the *pargana* level were administered by the *Mutawalli*.<sup>136</sup> It appears that in the first-half of the eighteenth century the *Mutawalli* came to be increasingly associated with the administration of the *madad-maash* lands. From a document in the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas* we learn that a *pargana Mutawalli* was appointed by virtue of a royal order, and served under the *Sadr*. He enquired into the condition of the persons who held the *madad-maash* lands or received cash allowances and was required to send regular reports to the office of the *Sadr*. He put his seal on the papers relating to the grant of the *madad-maash* lands and of cash allowances.<sup>137</sup>

The institution of the *siyurghal* or the *madad-maash* lands occupied an important position in the agrarian system under the Mughals. Looked at casually it might appear to be an institution born of misguided charity which had produced a class of parasites who contributed little or nothing to the political and economic life of the country but were a constant source of drain on the public treasury. A careful examination of the institution will, however, expose the unsoundness of this view and give a real insight into the nature and functions of the institution in the agrarian set-up of the country. In fact it had an important bearing on the political, economic and social life of the country and had a distinctive place in the administrative set-up of the Mughal Empire.

The Mughal Emperors, generally speaking, were too secular to waste public money on the maintenance of a class of parasites that contributed little to their political and administrative ends. It will be readily conceded by every student of medieval Indian History that the political and agrarian conditions in those days were hardly conducive to the successful implementation of the imperial regulations in the vast Empire of Hindustan. The tenacious *zamindars*, whose overwhelming majority consisted of the Hindus and who were the pivot of the political and agrarian life of the country, were always ready to defy the State authority when they could do so with any degree of success. In fact, if we are keen to detect any trace of class war in medieval times we should seek it in the relationship that subsisted between the State and the petty princes or the numerous descendants of petty princes who were described by Indo-Persian historians as *zamin-dars*. It was a never-ending conflict, sometimes hidden, at other times

<sup>136</sup>. The *Mutawalli* has been mentioned as one of the signatories of a *chaknama* in a document dated 1019 A.H./1610 A.D. We know from a later document that he was an officer connected with the administration of *madad maash* lands at the *pargana* level. (*Dastur-ul-Amali-Bekas*, ff. 38-39). It is probable that the office of the *Mutawalli* dates back to Jahangir's reign if not to an earlier time.

<sup>137</sup>. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 38, 39.



apparent, in which the *zamindars* were subdued temporarily but were never reconciled to their subjugation by the imperial authority. Thus the attitude of the *zamindars* towards the State considerably increased the difficulty of maintaining law and order in large areas of the Empire which were at a distance from the administrative centres. It was even more difficult to collect land-revenue where and when the *zamindars* chose to withhold their co-operation from the revenue officers. Under such conditions it was almost a political and administrative necessity to create some pockets of local influence which could be always depended upon for loyal services to the State. This could only be achieved if intelligent and tactful Muslims could be induced to settle down in the interior of the country and if their means of livelihood were assured by the State in the form of the grant of revenue-free lands. The grant of the *madad-maash* lands, free from all taxation, was a powerful stimulant to those Muslim families that did not like the profession of a warrior and yet shunned trade and commerce as incompatible with their family pride and tradition. Thus the Mughal State embarked upon a policy of creating small pockets of Muslim population in a number of villages almost in every *pargana*. The people who were generally chosen for the task were the Shaikhs and the Sayyids.<sup>138</sup> They were not only pious and learned but fairly tactful and intelligent. They settled down in remote villages in the interior and created a position of honour and respect for themselves among the local population. The original grantees, at any rate, won for themselves the coveted title of *miyan*, because of their attitude of sympathy and catholicity of outlook. This title symbolised the admiration of the people for their virtue, kindness and docility. This attitude of the public towards the *madad-maash* grantees proves that they could generate confidence in the minds of the Hindu population and most probably exercised their influence upon the local officers to protect the local Hindus from unjust exactions or other forms of oppression. If they succeeded in their efforts to protect the rights and interests of the local population they indirectly inspired confidence amongst the rural Hindus in the State. On the other hand, they furnished the government officers with reliable information about the prevailing political and administrative conditions in the locality, and in an emergency they could join the government forces as soldiers to curb a local disturbance. Economically, the practice created a considerably large class, spread all over Northern India, which depended for its livelihood on land. They were not

138. Under Akbar, however, a few grants were made to non-Muslims. The grantees were a Parsee, named Kaiqubad and a Hindu priest at Gokul. Whereas the grant made to the Parsee is named as *madad maash* the *farman* conferring the grant of village to Gokul merely states that the said village had been granted to meet the expenses of temple and that the grantee was exempted from all taxes including land-revenue. See the *Parsees at the Court of Akbar* pp. 119, 193 ; *Imperial Farmans* : No. v, also see *Farman* No. VII.



called *zamindars* but for all practical purposes they had the same interest and title in land as the *zamindars*. They enjoyed the unique economic immunity inasmuch as their lands were exempt from all taxation. But the grants were generally small ranging from 100 to 1000 *bighas* and, therefore, they were, in most cases, not much better off than the village *zamindars*. Thus the practice of granting the *madad-maash* lands created a class of Muslim village *zamindars* and later they actually assumed the *zamindari* rights<sup>139</sup> and had then to pay the land-revenue customarily paid by hereditary *zamindars* or by those who had acquired *zamindari* rights by purchase. It is, however, not suggested that the Muslim *zamindars* of the later Mughal period were invariably the grant holders or the descendants of the original grantees. Muslims, of course, acquired *zamindari* rights by purchase and sometimes converted the *ijara* lands into *zamindaris*. But it is important to note that by the first-half of the eighteenth century the *madad-maash* grants were quite freely treated as *zamindari* lands in all transactions and hardly any distinction was made between a *zamindar* who held his land by right of purchase and a person who had acquired hereditary rights as a grantee's descendant.

Socially, the institution became responsible for fostering the spirit of religious toleration in the rural population of Hindustan. The Muslims who settled down in the villages had direct contact with the urban culture of the provincial or district headquarters and were thus in a position to carry the Muslim urban culture to the remote interior of the country. They found themselves in new and unfamiliar surroundings. But as they had a long cultural tradition and continued to maintain their contacts with the provincial headquarters or with the capital they did not assimilate the local culture of the majority, and retained the essentials of their religious beliefs, manners and customs. Nevertheless they were considerably influenced by local customs and some of these got absorbed into their own culture. With the passage of time they began to participate in local festivals not because they identified themselves with their ideological foundations but only as customary social behaviour which gave them an opportunity of enjoying themselves by sharing festivities with persons who, although they professed a different religion, were their life-long companions in facing the common problems of rural life. Similarly the simple-minded Hindus in the villages came to know and understand the Muslim culture and religion as practised and observed by the Muslims in their daily life. Gradually they realised that the Muslims were not as unholy as they had been led to think by absorbing the prejudices of their forefathers who identified a Muslim with a Turk and a *malechha*, a tyrant and an unclean person. As a result of their intimate and frequent contacts with the Muslims the Hindus developed an attitude

<sup>139</sup>. *Allahabad Documents*, No. 439.



of toleration towards the much despised Turk. The odious and contemptible appellation "Turk" was replaced by the affectionate and respectable title of *miyan*, signifying a man of extreme docility and innate nobility.

It is difficult to form a precise idea of how far the two sections of the rural population influenced each other and what practices and customs interpenetrated their life. But one who is well-acquainted with rural conditions in areas of mixed population as well as in areas where Muslim population is concentrated only in a number of villages will agree with the present writer that the settling down of Muslim families in rural areas had a far-reaching influence on the ideas and attitudes of the Indian villagers. The Hindu and the Muslim villagers alike developed a deep rooted sense of religious toleration which was born of the realisation of common needs and problems in the limited but compact environment of an Indian village. Direct personal contacts of life-long duration, often maintained for generations, fostered an understanding between the two sections of the rural population and served to weaken the prejudices they originally had against each other. The impact of religious toleration has been so deep that an illiterate villager, Hindu or Muslim, not only believes in but practises complete religious toleration, and shuns acts which might hurt the susceptibilities of the followers of another religion. Thus while the grants of revenue-free lands have been liquidated and even the descendants of the grantees have in many cases emigrated from their ancestral homes, the legacy of the religious toleration in rural India is still a cherished asset left by the institution of *madad-maash* grants.



facts together we learn that in the village of Ganeshpur, which was a *raiya* village, there were more *Muqaddams* than one and that *nankar* allowance was allowed to certain persons not specified in the accounts. Moreover, probably more than one person engaged for the collection of the land-revenue of the village. We cannot for the present identify the *Muqaddams* with those who were allowed *nankar*. But evidence from another source<sup>3</sup> lends strong support to the inference that *nankar* was allowed to the *Muqaddams* or *zamindars* for services rendered by them in connection with the cultivation of land and the assessment and collection of land-revenue. Thus the *zamindar's* presence is indicated in the *raiya* villages.

This inference is directly corroborated and confirmed by the relevant evidence contained in an administrative manual entitled the *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, probably compiled in Bihar. This evidence is available in two separate passages, one dealing with the assignment of *jagirs* and the other with agrarian conditions that prevailed in the areas held by the *raiya zamindars*. We learn from the first passage<sup>4</sup> that for the purpose of assigning *jagirs* the imperial territories were classified into three broad categories, namely the *mahal-i-zortalab*, *mahal-i-ausat* and *mahal-i-raiya*. The *mansabdars* were also classified into three grades (1) the *Nazims* (2) the *Diwans*, and the *Bakhshis* and other high *mansabdars* and (3) the small *mansabdars*. An examination of the evidence under reference seems to indicate that there was a definite relationship between the agrarian conditions that existed in certain areas and the assignment of these areas to various grades of officers. The *mansabdars* with considerable military power at their disposal were assigned *mahals* where the demonstration or actual use of force was necessary or was frequently required for the collection of land-revenue. Such areas have been described as *zortalab*<sup>5</sup> and *ausat*. But most of the small *mansabdars* were assigned areas or *mahals* where land-revenue could be collected without the help of a strong contingent, which they were not in a position to muster. Such areas were known as *raiya*. The classification of the imperial territories into these categories appears to have been based on certain considerations such as the relative importance of the following factors : (1) kind of persons who engaged for the land-revenue, (2) nature of the revenue settlement (whether in the form of a fixed tribute or on the basis of detailed assessment), (3) number of villages for which the person or persons engaged, (4) racial character and (5) the general attitude of the people towards the government and local officers. In view

3. Add 6603, f., 79b ; Add, f. 100a ; *Dastur-ul-mal-i-Bekas*, f. 50a-52b.

4. *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, ff. 7a-9b.

5. *Zortalab* in this context signifies the areas where use of force or demonstration of force was necessary; *ausat* literally means average. Here the *mahal-i-ausat* seems to denote an area which was neither *zortalab* nor *raiya*. In other words in these areas the agrarian conditions were such that the demonstration or actual use of force was frequently necessary in them.



of the above factors, the *raiyyati* areas could be those where land-revenue would be normally collected by a small *mansabdars* without resorting to force. The person who engaged for land-revenue in these areas were men possessing small means and power who were hardly in a position to defy the authority of the agents of a small *jagirdar*.

It remains for us to investigate what persons engaged for the land-revenue in the *raiyyati* villages? Were they ordinary peasants or *asamis* or *zamindars* of a particular type who paid land-revenue on the basis of a detailed assessment? A passage in the *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid* entitled 'On the Way of *Zamindari*' furnishes us with a definite answer to our query. This passage gives an account of the agrarian conditions existing in the *raiyyati* and *zortalab* areas in the first-half of the eighteenth century. The important posts were assigned to *mansabdars* who held small ranks and who were allowed to employ a small number of soldiers for the collection of land-revenue. The limited number of soldiers proved inadequate for the suppression of those who rebelled and refused the payment of land-revenue and who could be subdued only with threat or the actual use of force. These officers, in order to gain personal promotion, were keen to show an increase in the *jama*; consequently they ascertained all the resources of the estate owned by the (small) *zamindars* and assessed them heavily. The *zamindars*, in their turn, shifted the burden on to the *raiyyat* and the *raiyyat* complained. Driven to extremity the *raiyyat* left the *mulk-i-raiyyati* and settled in the territories (*mulk*) held by the *zortalab zamindars*. As a result the territories of the *zortalab zamindars* tended to be well-populated and prosperous and they grew strong, whereas the small *raiyyati zamindars* were reduced to poverty. They could not pay land-revenue and the profession of *zamindari* fell into disrepute.<sup>6</sup>

A study of the evidence seems to indicate that *mulk-i-raiyyati* and *mahal-i-raiyyati* were the groups of villages in which small *zamindars* engaged for the land-revenue on the basis of a detailed assessment, and that these *zamindars* were called *raiyyati zamindars* in contradistinction to the *zamindars* who were described as *zortalab* and paid the land-revenue only when threatened with the demonstration or actual use of force. It may be suggested that these *zamindars* normally held a large number of villages, a *pargana* or even more than a *pargana*. It is probable that some of them were *zamindars* who paid a fixed amount (*peshkash*) instead of *malwajib* or land-revenue. On the basis of the evidence under examination we can also infer that in the *raiyyati* villages the peasants or ryots did not engage for the land-revenue. The share in the produce or the fixed cash which they paid for the land under their cultivation was a matter of agreement between them and their

6. *Hidayat-ul-Qarmaid*, ff. 64b-66b; of Bernier p. 205. "Sometimes they (the peasants oppressed in the territories of the great Mogol) fly to the territories of a Raja, because there they find less oppression and are allowed a greater degree of confort."



*zamindars*. Any increase or decrease in the land-revenue was, in the first instance, the concern of the *zamindars*.

We now proceed to examine the important information relating to this question in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* and its Supplement.<sup>7</sup>

The statements made in it reveal that, broadly speaking, there were three categories of villages in Gujarat, namely, villages which were in the *taalluqa* or *zamindari* of *ismi* or *umdah* *zamindars* who held a *pargana* or more than a *pargana*. These were the *ghair-amali* villages or the villages where the land-revenue was not directly assessed on the village lands by the Mughal government. These *zamindars*, however, had either to pay a fixed sum as *peshkash* or to render military service in lieu of *peshkash*. Secondly, there were villages in the *taalluqas* of *zamindars* who held their lands as *banth* holders in which the Koli or Rajput *zamindars* claimed one-fourth of the land (or at times one-fourth of the revenue), but later such lands or villages paid a nominal charge known as *salami* or *peshkash*. Outside these *taalluqas* were lands and villages which have been described respectively as *talpad* and *dehat-i-raiyati*. These lands and villages were resumed by the government ; in other words they were areas and villages where the imperial regulations about assessment and collection were fully enforced, and the government officers dealt with those who held the land or were acknowledged as its *maliks*. Before we enquire as to who were these *maliks*, so explicitly referred to in a *farman* contained in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* dealing with the assessment and collection of land revenue, it is important to note that by and large the *talpad* lands were in the *raiyati* villages, but the possibility cannot be ruled out that certain *talpad* lands might have been in the villages held by the *banth* holders and as such they could not be described as *raiyati* villages.

It thus appears that the *raiyati* villages in Gujarat were those which were outside the *taalluqas* held by the *zamindars* of some particular types and that to those villages the imperial regulations for assessment and collection of land revenue were fully applicable. As yet we have not examined such facts relating to the internal conditions prevailing in these villages as the kind of people who cultivated the land, whether the agricultural community in a village consisted of more than one class, whether certain members of the agricultural community enjoyed certain superior rights of property in land as compared with others, and whether the person who engaged for the land-revenue was the ordinary cultivator in the sense of a mere *kashikar* or *asami* or one who enjoyed superior rights of property in land. An enquiry into these questions will further elucidate the nature of the *raiyati* villages and will clarify our understanding of the land relationship under the Mughal.

Fortunately a *farman* issued by Aurangzeb, contained in the

7. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Vol. I, pp. 21, 22, 173, 174 ; *Mirat*, Supplement, pp. 228-229.

Very useful book for H.A. Final but is difficult to understand



*Mirati-Ahmadi*<sup>8</sup>, furnishes the requisite information for studying the internal working of the *raiya* villages.

An examination of the relevant sections of the *farman* reveals that there were at least two classes of people in the agricultural community of a village. These were the *raaya* who appear to be common cultivators or what are known in Northern India as *asamis* or *kashtkars*. They engaged in cultivation and most probably enjoyed no transferable rights of property in land. At least the regulations do not refer to any such rights. The *farman* also mentions the *arabab-i-zirraat*, which literally means owners of cultivation or cultivators. The rights of these people, however, have not been specified. The term appears to have been used to designate, in general, all agriculturists whether they were *raaya* (ordinary peasants) or those who were agriculturists and at the same time claimed certain rights of property in land. Another section of the agricultural community has been referred to as *malik* and as *arbab-i-zamin* and signifies owners of land. An examination of the relevant evidence clearly reveals that the two terms have been used as synonyms. The *malik* enjoyed the following interests and rights of property in land :

- (1) He retained a claim in the produce even when he did not cultivate the land or did not engage for land-revenue assessed on

8. In view of the importance of the evidence a few general observations about its Nature and scope may be made. The *farman* was issued to Mohammad Hashim, the *Diwan* of the province of Gujrat in 1079 A.H./1669-70, and is entitled *Farman* about the collections of *kharaj* or land-revenue. In all it contains 18 clauses dealing with the work of assessment and collection in order to meet the various exigencies which might arise from time to time. The regulations have been stated in very general terms of Muslim *fiqh* and for this reason it has been sometimes dismissed as a theoretical exposition of the Muslim Law rather than actual regulations framed to provide guidance to the revenue officials in their routine work of assessment and collection. Others have accepted it as actual regulations expressed in terms of Islamic jurisprudence which could be fruitfully invoked by the officers serving in the land-revenue administration in Gujrat.

The present writer fails to agree with those who dismiss it as a theoretical exposition of the Islamic jurisprudence. In fact these were the regulations meant to provide general guidance to the land-revenue officers and were meant to be enforced throughout the length and breadth of the Mughal Empire as is explicitly stated in the preamble to the *farman*. It is incorrect to presume that they were specifically meant for Gujrat only, consequently the terms and the jargon peculiar to the land revenue administration of Indian origin have been assiduously avoided. One who has some familiarity with the revenue literature of the period will readily agree that many of the revenue terms used in a province were unknown in another province or the same term was used in quite different senses in various parts of the Empire. Under these conditions a *farman* containing regulations for the general guidance of revenue officials of the Empire was bound to contain general and neutral terms and these terms could be interpreted to meet the diverse situations which arose from time to time in various parts of the Empire. For the present discussion, therefore, the interpretation of the terms used in the *farman* should not be exclusively based on the facts of agrarian history in Gujarat, and any interpretation of the said regulations should be correlated with the facts of agrarian history in the rest of the Empire.



the land entered against his name as *malik*. Under these conditions his share amounted to the difference between the *malik's* original share of the produce and the amount paid to the government as land-revenue.

- (2) His right to bring back his land under his cultivation or management remained even though he did not engage for the land-revenue for some time.
- (3) He enjoyed the right to sell his land or *malikana* rights in land.
- (4) He could mortgage his land.
- (5) The *malikana* right was hereditary.

An examination of the evidence summed up above indicates that the *malik* enjoyed transferable rights of property in land and also the right to engage for land-revenue; further the term was applied to a person belonging to a certain class in the agricultural community. These inferences are directly corroborated both by independent documentary evidence, coming from various parts of the Empire, such as Delhi, Ajmer, Awadh, Bihar and Bengal and by the evidence furnished by the chronicles. We have examined this evidence in some detail in the chapter on the *zamindars* and *zamindari*. Here it is sufficient to note that the transferable rights of property in land in our documents have been referred to variously as *biswai*, *satarhi*, *milkiyat*, *zamindari*, *malikana* and *muqaddami*, including the right to engage for land-revenue, and that those who held these rights are described as *zamindars*. These *zamindars*, like the *maliks* referred to in the *farman*, we have examined, were entitled to *malikana*, even when they did not engage for land-revenue, or did not cultivate their land for some time. These facts when read together lead us to only one conclusion: that the rights vested in the *malik* by virtue of the *farman* were essentially the same as were associated with the class of people described as *zamindars* who enjoyed certain transferable rights of property in land including the right to engage for land-revenue on the basis of detailed assessment. We know that the lands owned by the *malik* were also subject to such detailed assessment. Thus there seems to be some justification for identifying the *malik* with the *zamindar* and for suggesting that the *malik* was but another name for *zamindar*. We, however, do not insist on such an identification because the term *malik* could have been more general and more comprehensive than the term *zamindar*. Whereas it signified all that was associated with the *zamindar* of a particular type, it could also include such other persons as enjoyed all the rights associated with the *zanindar* but were known by some different appellation. For example, the *Pattwat* and the *Girasia* in Rajputana and the *Pooligars* in the Deccan were essentially village *zamindars* under different names. Whether in Gujarat those who enjoyed the rights of property in land vested in the *malik* were described as *zamindars* or bore some other appellation, we do not know. There is nothing on record to furnish a definite answer to the question. Local researches may yield some useful and interesting results,



and till fresh evidence is forthcoming the question may be left open. For the present the result of the above discussion based on the examination of available evidence may be summed up as follows :

- (1) The *raiya*ti villages were outside the *taalluqa*s of the *zamindars* who paid *peshkash* or held their *taalluqa*s as *banth* holders.
- (2) In these *raiya*ti villages the imperial regulations for assessment and collection of land-revenue were fully enforced.
- (3) Within these villages there was a class in the agricultural community that enjoyed certain transferable rights of property in land including the right to engage for land-revenue, which another section of the agricultural community referred to as *raaya* did not enjoy.

We have examined at some length the relevant evidence culled from different sources, documents, chronicles and administrative manuals, pertaining to different parts of the Empire. They tend to confirm one another and enable us tentatively to form an idea of the nature of a *raiya*ti village—pending the availability of such conclusive evidence as may either rebut or modify it. The main features of a *raiya*ti village may be provisionally summed up as follows :

- (1) *Mulk-i-raiya*ti, *mahal-i-raiya*ti or *dehat-i-raiya*ti were those areas or groups of villages where a particular type of *zamindars* enjoyed certain transferable rights of property in land including the right to engage for land-revenue, based on a detailed assessment of their estates or *zamindaris*.
- (2) In a contemporary Persian source, the *Hidayat-ul-Qawaid*, they have been referred to as *raiya*ti *zamindars*.
- (3) The use of the term *raiya*ti villages does not lend support to the inference that in *raiya*ti villages the ordinary peasant enjoyed transferable rights of property in land or the right to engage for land-revenue.

In the course of the preceding discussion it has already been stated that in Gujarat the term *taalluqa* referred to the villages which were not *raiya*ti but were held by the *zamindars* who paid *peshkash* or held these villages as *jagir* in return for military service rendered to the Mughal government. It also applied to the group of villages held as *banth* which were either entirely exempted from the land-revenue or in which one-fourth of the land belonged to the *banth* holders who paid nominal charges for these lands known as *peshkash*. The term *taalluqa* as used in the *Siyaq Nama* only shows that of the seventeen villages in the *pargana* eight were *raiya*ti and nine were *taalluqa* villages. Belonging to both these categories there were a few entire villages held in the *aimma* rights. Of the nine *taalluqa* villages four were held in *aimma* rights and only five were assessed against a *jama* of Rs. 1,600/-. There is no indication that the *taalluqa* villages were held by the *zamindars* who paid *peshkash* or were *banth* holders. On the other



hand, there is a clear indication that, like the *raiya* villages, these villages were subject to detailed assessment and the *Amin* maintained the assessment papers pertaining to them. The question naturally arises, what does the term '*taalluqa*' precisely indicate in the *Siyaq Nama*? Turning to a Persian source, compiled early in the nineteenth century, we find that *taalluqas*, subject to detailed assessment, did exist under the Mughals and that these were of more than one type.<sup>9</sup>

The work defines *taalluqa* as a group or circle of villages which were created by the government for administrative expediency. But other type of *taalluqas* were also well-known. The person who engaged for land-revenue on behalf of other *zamindars* was known as the *taalluqadar*, and the villages for which he engaged were described as *taalluqa*. Thus a *taalluqadar* could engage for land-revenue on behalf of a single *zamindar*, or on behalf of a number of *zamindars* who authorised him to do so for their villages or for their shares in a number of villages. The *taalluqa*, again, was the name given to a *zamindari* which had not been inherited but purchased in recent time.

Thus a *taalluqa* would seem to have possessed any of the following features :

- (1) A number of villages for which a single individual engaged on behalf of a number of *zamindars* who owned the villages or owned shares in the villages as a co-parcenary body.
- (2) A new *zamindari* acquired through purchase.
- (3) A circle or group of villages formed for administrative purposes.

With which of these can the *taalluqa*, referred to in the *Siyaq Nama*, be identified? It cannot be identified with the *tallaqqa* in the sense of a group or circle of villages created for administrative purposes, because such an interpretation would hardly help to distinguish villages from the *raiya* villages which appears to be the main purpose of classification under two distinct heads. Then does it refer to a newly acquired *zamindari*? Its use in opposition to *raiya* hardly justifies any such inference as the latter cannot be taken to denote a *zamindari* of very old standing inherited by the present holders. We are, therefore, left only with the choice of interpreting the *taalluqa* referred to in the *Siyaq Nama* in the sense of a group of villages for which a single individual engaged on behalf of number of *zamindars* who might or might not have been co-sharers in the *zamindari* or co-parcenary *Zamindars*. We have some definite evidence to show that such *taalluqadari* tenures did exist in the part of the country known as Awadh.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand the *taalluqa* in the sense of a newly acquired *zamindari* or a small *zamindari* separated from the original large estate was quite well-

9. Add. 6603, pp. pp. 54b, 55a.

10. *Chronicles of Onnao*, pp. 146-156.



known in Bengal.<sup>11</sup> In view of this definition of *taalluqa* the term *raiya* for a village in the given context will further imply that in such a village individual *zamindars* would personally engage for land-revenue for their respective shares in the village *zamindari*. This appears to be the real significance of the word *raiya*. And it was also for this reason that *raiya* was used as an adjective to describe those *zamindars* who individually engaged for land-revenue for their shares in the village and did not allow any one to engage on their behalf. In other words, *raiya* villages were those where the government directly dealt with the individual owner of the land known as the *zamindar*.

It may be noted that there is a reference to *Muqaddams* in the *raiya* village of Ganeshpur. Now we are in a position to identify them either with the *zamindars* or with their representatives because the term *Muqaddam* has been used in the revenue literature of the period to denote the village *zamindar* as well as his representative.

Life is a game, play it.

11. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Khalisa*, ff. 9b, 10a ; Fifth Committee Report, III, Glossary p. 51, Add, 6603, ff. 54b, 55a.



## APPENDIX B

Table showing *ghair amali*<sup>1</sup> parganas and villages within the *khiraji sarkars* as given in the Supplement to the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*.

### A. Sarkar Ahmadabad : <sup>2</sup>

Total no. of mahals	No of parganas entirely held by <i>ghair amali</i> zamindars	No. of parganas containing <i>ghair amali</i> villages
33	1	3

Details of the villages in the three mahals containing *ghair amali*, villages

Pargana	Total no. of villages	<i>Ghair amali</i> villages	Remaining villages with <i>jamadi</i>
1. Idar	767	290	477
2. Birpur	145	7	138
3. Bir Makanam	628	105	523

### B. Sarkar Patan<sup>3</sup> :

Total no. of mahals	No. of Parganas entirely held by <i>zamin-dars</i>	No of parganas containing <i>ghair amali</i> villages
17	2	4

1. Presence of *ghair amali zamindars* is also indicated in the Deccan. In *pargana* Nalair-Par Nala out of 37 mahals two are described as *ghair amali*. In the province of Aurangabad one entire *sarkar* has been shown as *ghair amali* (see *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shabanshabi*, ff. 49a, 59a).

2. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. pp. 188-198.

3. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp. pp. 198-204.



Details of villages in the four *parganas* containing *ghair amali* villages.

Pargana	Total no. of villages	Ghair amali villages	Remaining villages with <i>jamadami</i>
1. Palanpur	179	29	150
2. Tirwara	104	72	32
3. Walia	258	137	121
4. Santalpur	..	..	..

C. **Sarkar Baroda** :<sup>4</sup> It comprised four *mahals*. No *ghair amali* village or *pargana* has been noted. All the four *mahals* are given as *khiraji* specifying the number of villages in each *pargana* together with the *jamadami* figures.

D. **Sarkar Bharoach** :<sup>5</sup>

Total no. of <i>mahals</i>	No. of <i>parganas</i> entirely held by the <i>Zamindars</i>	No of <i>parganas</i> containing <i>ghair amali</i> villages
12	3	3

The names of the three *parganas* held by the *zamindars* are given below together with the notes against them as given in the supplement to the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*.

<u>Pargana</u>	<u>Note in the text</u>
1. Altesar	Entirely held by <i>ghair amali zamindars</i> . Whenever assigned to the <i>Mutassadi</i> of Surat or to one who maintained a large force, the collections were made in accordance with the strength of the army. Details of the villages not available in the records.
2. Tarkesar	Situated in a hilly area ; the <i>Nazim</i> and the <i>jagirdar</i> could not establish their control ; under the occupation of <i>zamindar</i> .
3. Chahar Mandvi	An area of <i>zortalab zamindari</i> ; always assigned to the <i>Mutassadi</i> of Surat. He collected <i>peshkash</i> when he led an expedition. <i>Jamadami</i> fixed at three lacs of <i>dams</i> . Details of the villages not available in the records.

4. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp., pp. 204, 205.

5. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, Supp., pp. 205-206.



## APPENDIX C

### Nature of the *mal-o-jihat* and *sair jihat* taxes

The Mughals government levied taxes on cultivated and pasture lands, on the produce of rivers and ponds, on commodities manufactured by artisans, on the sale and purchase of commodities and taxes to meet administrative chagres. These taxes were classified under the heads *mal*, *jihat* *sair jihat*, and *sair-ul-wajuh*. However, in the assessment account of a village under *zabt*, the *mal*, *jihat* and *sair-jihat* constituted the land-revenue (*jama*.)

Any attempt to understand the nature of the land-revenue demand under the Mughals and to determine the share of the State in the produce of the land necessitates an investigation into the precise meaning and implications of these terms. As far as the present writer is aware, no serious attempt has hitherto been made in this direction by modern historians.

The earliest definitions of these terms are available in the *Ain-i-Akbari*. In short, says Abul Fazl, "whatever was assessed on the cultivated land in accordance with the *rai* or crop rates was known as *mal*. Whatever was collected from various kinds of arts and crafts was termed *jihat* and the rest of the taxes came to be known as *sair jihat*.<sup>1</sup> According to the author of the *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, an accountancy manual compiled in the reign of Aurangzeb, "the collections made from crops were known as *mal* and a number of taxes which were included in the *jama* under the administration of certain revenue collectors were known as *jihat*. Later on *jihat* was included or merged into the *mal* and the complex phrase *mal-o-jihat* was used as a single term. On the other hand, the taxes on cloth, skin, oil, grains, articles of food and medicine, horses and camels, collected in the market place and at the *chabutra-i-kotwali*,<sup>2</sup> were known as *sair-i-jihat*."<sup>3</sup>

A comparison of the definitions given in the two sources, mentioned above, shows that they agree on the meaning of the term *mal*. However, the *jihat* in the *Ain* signifies a tax on various kinds of arts and crafts, whereas in the *Khulasat-us-Siyaq* it has been defined as an intergral part of *mal*

1. *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, p. 205.

2. *Chabutra*, means a platform of earth or masonry, raised slight above the surface of the ground. This name was given to the office of the Kotwal or head police officer.

3. *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*, f. 13b; for the definition of the *sair-i-jihat* see also *Farbang-i-Kardani* f. 34b.



shown in the *jama*. Moreover, the *Ain* defines *sair jihat* as those taxes which were collected over and above the *mal-o-jihat*. The text in the *Khulasat-us-Siyaq* implies that the *sair jihat* included all taxes, over and above the *mal-o-jihat* which were collected at the *chabura-i-kotwali*.

An administrative manual prepared during Aurangzeb's reign defines *mal* as real or original tax and *jihat* as charges collected to meet the expenses incurred in connection with the assessment of *mal*.<sup>4</sup> Here we may note that *jihat* has been used in the same sense as defined in *Khulasat-us-Siyaq*. However in the manual referred to above, the nature of *jihat* has been specified. We may, therefore, infer that by the time of Aurangzeb the term *jihat* had acquired a connotation different from the one in which it was used in the *Ain*. In our administrative manual, the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mujmalai*, the definition of *mal* and *jihat* is followed by a definition of *sair-ul-wajuh* which has been defined as all the taxes collected over and above *mal-o-jihat*.<sup>5</sup> We read in the *Siyaq Nama* that all collections over and above *mal-o-jihat* are shown under the head *sair-ul-wajuh*.<sup>6</sup> But this is precisely the definition of *sair-i-jihat* given in the *Ain* and inferred from the text of the *Khulasat-us-Siyaq* which, however, defines it only as taxes collected in the market place and in the *chabutra-i-kotwali*. If we are led by the definitions alone there appears to be some justification for identifying *sair-jihat* with *sairul-wajuh*. But what follows the definition of *sair-ul-wajuh* as given in the above two sources, makes it difficult to identify the two terms with each other and necessitates further investigation.

The *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mujmalai*, after defining *sair-ul-wajuh*, gives a detailed list of the articles of taxation<sup>7</sup> classified under certain sub-heads such as *hasil-i-sair*, *bazyast*, and *sair-jihat*. There is yet another sub-head which is not decipherable.<sup>8</sup> A careful examination of the text and the articles of taxation given in the two sources<sup>9</sup> seems to suggest that *sair-ul-*

4. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mujmalai* f. 28a.

5. *Ibid*, f. 28a.

6. *Siyaq Nama*, p. 307.

7. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mujmalai*, ff. 28b-29a.

8. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mujmalai*, ff. 28a-29a; cf. *Siyaq Nama*, p. 307. The sub-heads under *sair wajuh*, in the *Siyaq Nama*, are given as *peshkash*, hidden treasure, *bait-ul-mal*, *basil-i-baghat*, and *bazyast*.

9. Some of the items of taxation shown under the head *sair-ul-wajuh*, common in two sources, namely the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mujmalai* and the *Siyaq Nama*, are given below:

1. *peshkash* collected by the karori
2. property found lying on the ground or dug up from the earth.
3. escheated property belonging to men of position.
4. property for which no lawful heir put forth claim; taxes on:
5. pressing mill.
6. groves.
7. shops.
8. market.



*wajuh* in these sources signifies those taxes which were collected over and above the *mal-o-jihat* by the *Karori*, and that it has been further classified into certain sub-heads including *sair-jihat* or *sair-ul-jihat*. While various articles of taxation under the sub-heads have been specified in the *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mujmalai*, the text does not specify the items of taxation under *sair-i-jihat*. However, a brief note says that the items of articles of taxation classified under *sair-ul-jihat* pertain to *mal-o-jihat*. In other words the taxes termed *sair jihat* were charged in connection with the assessment or collection of *mal-o-jihat*. The inference is directly corroborated by a piece of evidence available in the assessment account of village Ganeshpur, given in the *Siyag Nama*.<sup>10</sup> The evidence clearly indicates that the *sair jihat*, as we shall examine it in some detail, was a tax imposed in rural and agricultural areas and was closely related to *mal-o-jihat*.<sup>11</sup> Thus we can conclude that whereas in the *Ain* the *sair jihat* signifies all taxes collected over and above the *mal-o-jihat*, by the time of Aurangzeb the *sair-jihat* or *sair-ul-jihat* is referred to as an agricultural tax closely related to the amount assessed as *mal-o-jihat*. On the other hand the *sair-ul-wajuh* signified all the taxes which were collected over and above the *mal-o-jihat*, and the *sair-i-jihat* appears to have been a part or sub-head of the *sair-ul-wajuh*.

The assessment account of Village Ganeshpur not only corroborates our inference about the nature of these taxes but also reveals the relationship that subsisted between the three taxes known as *mal-o-jihat* and *sair-jihat*. It also helps us to form an idea of the magnitude of the land-revenue demand. An examination of the *khasra-i-zabt*<sup>12</sup> and *jamabandi*<sup>13</sup> of Village Ganeshpur for the year 1104 *fasli* shows that the total area under various crops, including the area of land which was twice brought under cultivation, amounted to 34 *bighas* and 15 *biswas*. The total assessment on the village for the whole year, including the *kharif*<sup>14</sup> and *rabi*<sup>15</sup> assessments, amounted to Rs. 106/9/- annas. The break-up of the *jama* or total land-revenue demand under *mal*, *jihat* and *sair jihat* is given as follows :

<i>mal</i> Rs. 88/2½ annas }		
<i>jihat</i> Rs. 4/7½ annas }	<i>mal-o-jihat</i>	Rs. 92/10/-
<i>sair jihat</i> Rs. 13/15/-		Rs. 13/15/-
		<hr/> Rs. 106/9 <hr/>

10. *Siyag Nama*, pp. 33, 34.

11. Also see the Revenue Records, p. 260, *Fifth Committee Report*, II, p. 742.

12. *Siyag Nama*, p. 32, 33.

13. *Siyag Nama*, p. 33, 34.

14. *Kharif* : the crops which are sown before the commencement of rains or in April, May and reaped after their close in October-November. See Wilson's Glossary.

15. *Rabi* : The spring harvest or crop sown after the rains and reaped in the first three or four months of the year. See Wilson's Glossary.



The account shows that whereas separate cash rates were applied to various crops in order to assess *mal*, *jihat* assessment was made under two heads, namely, *jaribana*<sup>16</sup> and *deh nimi*<sup>17</sup> at the rate of 5%. Calculating a charge of 5% on the *mal*, given in the account as Rs. 88/2½ annas, we get Rs. 4/7½ annas or so which is exactly the amount given in our account as *jihat* assessment. Thus we have definite evidence to show that *jihat* was a tax calculated on *mal* or the original assessment of the share of the State in the produce. Such an inference about the nature of *jihat* only confirms the definition given in our sources and discussed in the above lines. The assessment figures of *sair-jihat*, in our assessment account, are given for *kharif* and *rabi* separately, and the account shows that they were calculated at the rate of 15%. 15% of *mal-o-jihat* amounting to Rs. 92/10 annas comes to Rs. 13/15 annas or so, which is exactly the amount shown as *sair-jihat* assessment. Thus *sair-jihat* signified certain charges calculated on the amount assessed as *mal-o-jihat* and it was a tax collected from the rural agricultural community. Moreover, most probably the charges were made in connection with the collection of *mal-o-jihat* taxes. The account under our examination, however, does not specify the items of taxation which were classified under *sair-jihat* and for this we should look elsewhere.

Some evidence about the items of taxations, classified under the head *sair-jihat*, is available in another account contained in the *Siyaq Nama*. An account of the collections and disbursement of *Pargana Fatehpur* throws some light on the point under investigation.<sup>18</sup> The collections in the account have been shown under the three separate heads including the *sair-ul-wajuh*. Various items of taxation under the latter have been specified and the amount collected under each of the items has been noted. In order to clarify the points involved in the discussion, the *sair-ul-wajuh* collections are reproduced.<sup>19</sup>

*Sair ul wajah*

Rs. 697/-

(The break-up of the account is given as follows)\*

Items of taxation<sup>20</sup>

Amount

*sadir-o-warid*

Rs. 300

16. *Siyaq Nama*, pp. 62-65.

17. *Ibid*, p. 64.

18. *Siyaq Nama* pp. 62-64.

19. *Ibid*, p. 64.

20. *sadir-o-warid* literally those who visit the village, technically a perquisite collected to entertain those who visit the village as travellers, pilgrims and strangers in general (see Revenue Records, p. 260). Most probably it refers to the perquisite elsewhere referred to as *mehmani*, ch. *Siyaq Nama*, p. 79; *Fifth Committee Report*, II, p. 472.



<i>shahnagi</i> <sup>21</sup> and <i>tappadari</i> <sup>22</sup>	Rs. 125/- (126/-)*
<i>talbana</i> <sup>23</sup>	Rs. 200/-
<i>sarf-i-sikka</i> <sup>24</sup>	Rs. 71/-

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TOTAL <sup>25</sup>	Rs. 696/-(697)*
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A careful examination of the nature of the taxes, given above, will show that excluding the *sarf-i-sikka*, or a percentage on the rupee if not paid in the established coin, the remaining of the three articles of taxation appear to have been exclusively rural and agricultural in their incidence. It also indicates that some of these fees and perquisites were charged to pay those who were employed to collect land-revenue. Such was the nature of taxes known as *talbana*, *shahnagi* and *tappadari*. The perquisites collected under the head *sadir-o-warid*, elsewhere referred to as *mehmani*<sup>26</sup>, were earmarked to defray the cost of entertaining travellers, pilgrims and strangers.<sup>27</sup>

These inferences are supported by similar documentary evidence available in the Fifth Report, which reproduces the *tumar-i-jama*<sup>25</sup> of *Pargana Akbar Shahi* in Bengal for the year 1691. The translation of the note introducing the *tumar-i-jama* or assessment account says that it includes the *mal-o-jihat* and *sair-jihat* assessment. An examination of the account shows that *sair-jihat* signified the collections over and above the original assessment of *mal-o-jihat* and that these taxes were rural and agricultural

21. *shahnagi* : a fee or tax collected to pay the wages of *Shana* employed to watch the crops (Revenue Records p. 260).

22. *tappadari* : perquisite of the *Tappadar* or the revenue official of a *tappa*.

23. *talbana* : the subsistence money paid to the persons employed in serving writs of payment of land revenue (*Diwan-i-Pasand*, pp. 37, 38 ; *Farhang-i-Kardani*, f. 37a ; *Chahar Gulzar-i-Shujai* 94b ; *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Bekas*, ff. 29b, 30a ; *Dasturul-Amal-i-Maj-umalai* ff. 46a-47a ; Revenue Records p. 260) According to the author of *Diwan-i-Pasand* the *sawar* was paid a daily allowance of Rs. 2/4 annas and the *piyadah* 2 annas per day.

24. *sarf-i-sikka*, also known as *batta* : a definite percentage charged per rupee, if not paid in the established coin, on account of the shortage in the weight of the coin (Revenue records, p. 260).

25. The actual total comes to Rs. 696 - whereas the opening account gives the amount as Rs. 697 -. There appears to be a mistake of one rupee in the details which may be ascribed to faulty transcription.

26. *Siyaq Nama*, pp. 78, 79 ; Fifth Report II, p. 742.

27. *Fifth Report* II, p. 742 ; ch. *Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Mujmalai* ff. 46 ab 47a.

28. *Tumar-i-jama* including the *mal-o-jihat* or revenues of the land and *sair jihat* or variable articles of imports of *pergunnah Akbar Shahy*, *sircar Oulumber*, Bengal year 1098, or A.D. 1691.

Mozahs or villages  
Mehals

135	5	10
15	0	0
<hr/>		
150	5	10



in their incidence. Moreover, these were calculated on *mal-o-jihat* at a certain percentage. However, it may be pointed out that the percentage given in the *Siyag Nama* is a flat rate, whereas in the document, reproduced in the Fifth Committee Report, variable rates are given for various articles of taxation. The taxes specified in the document are *damee*<sup>29</sup> *futah-daree*,<sup>30</sup> *dehदारि*<sup>31</sup> *tukee*,<sup>32</sup> *behai*<sup>33</sup> *kaghaz*,<sup>34</sup> *qusur* and *memahni*.<sup>35</sup> An examination of the nature of these taxes will show that they were collected to meet the expenses incurred on the collection of land-revenue and to defray other expenses which were the joint responsibility of the agricultural community.

Continued from page 159

Jumma or assessment Hubboobat, or taxes viz.					15,507	8	9
Damee, percent	2	8	0	414	6	2	
Fotahdaree	1	9	0	258	15	11	
Deedaree	1	4	0	207	2	15	
	<hr/>			<hr/>			
Percent	5	5	0	880	8	8	
	<hr/>			<hr/>			
Tukkee, percent	1	0	0	165	11	14	
Behai kaghuz (price of papers)	0	1	12	16	9	2	
	<hr/>			<hr/>			
	1	1	12	182	4	16	1062 13 4
	<hr/>			<hr/>			
				TOTAL	16,570	5	13
				<hr/>			
Ferah ; or additional taxes, calculated on the above total							
Kussoor, percent	15	0	0	2485	10	5	
Fotahdaree	0	8	0	97	4	17	
Howah	1	9	0	304	1	5	
	<hr/>			<hr/>			
Mehmany,	17	1	0		2,887	0	7
Total Hubboob or taxes					48	10	0
					3,998	13	11
				Total jumma	19,506	6	0

29. *damee* : A perquisite of a *dam* per bigha paid to the *zamindar*.

30. Perquisite realised by the office of the *Futadar*.

31. An article of the village expenses; perquisite of fees received from the ryots and appropriated to particular public officers in the village or other expenses.

32. Perquisite of one rupee in Bengal.

33. Charges for defraying the expenses of the purchase of stationary for offices connected with the village.

34. *Qusur*: deductions

35. Under the Mughal government a deduction from the revenue allowed to *zamindars* to defray the cost of entertaining travellers, pilgrims and strangers in general. See *Wilson's Glossary*.



The evidence available in the Revenue Records of the North Western Provinces shows that certain charges were made on the cultivated field which amounted in certain districts to one-fourth of the original assessment. The early British administrators did not describe them as *sair-jihat* but classified them, in view of their nature, under the head village expenses. As the passage under reference gives a lucid exposition of these taxes and defines some of the perquisites, referred to in the Persian documents, it deserves to be quoted at length. "Over and above the payments stipulated in the Pattah, the tenant has to answer a demand made on him by the landholder on account of village expenses equal to one-fourth of his stipulated payments; in no instance, does it, I believe, exceed this, and the amount is in general more than sufficient for the purpose required, which include the allowance of *Patwaree* or village accountant, Batta or percentage on the rupee if not paid in the established coin, expenses of measurements and survey wages of *Shahnas* or people to watch the crops, *Talubana* or subsistence money to the persons employed in serving writs for the payment of revenue, charity and diet of indigent travellers, beggars, and Brahmins; presents, which later consist of a few rupees given by the land holder at the period of harvest to the Tehsildar or native collector under whose immediate authority he is, to his *Amla* and to the police establishment in the Pargunna".<sup>36</sup>

The passage quoted above in the first place clearly brings out the nature of the taxes such as *talbana*, *shahnagi* and what in Persian document has been referred to as *sarf-i-sikka* and *sadir-o-warid*. Secondly, it corroborates that these were rural and agricultural taxes and were added to the original assessment. It may, however, be pointed out that the above passage includes the tax collected to meet the expenses of measurement and survey in the list of village expenses which in the Persian document is shown as the first separate charge on the original assessment. Moreover, the evidence contained in the Revenue Records refers also to the taxes collected to pay the policing charges, formerly known as *faujdari* perquisites, which has not been included in our sources under the head *sair-jihat*. These may be taken to indicate either local variations or the changes which has taken place in the administrative practices with the passage of time.

36. *Revenue Records of the North West Province*, p. 260.



## APPENDIX D

The *Diwan-i-Suba* obtained the following papers from his predecessor  
*Diwan* :

1. *Tumars* of the *khalisa mahals* bearing seals of the *Amins*, the *Qanungos* and the *zamindars*.
2. Papers pertaining to the *paibaqi mahals*.
3. *Dastur-ul-amal* pertaining to the *futahkhana* of the *parganas*.
4. Registers showing the number of wells in each *pargana* and bearing the seals of the *Qanungos*.
5. Registers of *mahal-i-jagir* showing the assignments made by the Revenue Ministry.
6. Petitions pertaining to the Treasury, bearing the seal of the *Karoris* and the *Futahdars*.
7. Papers pertaining to *mahal-i-sair*, bearing the seal of the *Amin* and the *Darogha* and the *Mushrif* and the *roznamcha* of receipts and disbursements.
8. *Tumars* showing the *bar-amad* against dismissed *Amils*, bearing the seal of the *Amin* and the *Darogha*.
9. *Tammassuks* of the surety of the *Amils*.
10. Register showing *peshkash* due against the *zamindars*.
11. Copies of the audits of the *Amil's* accounts prepared in the Revenue Ministry.
12. Copies of the *parwanas* issued to the *Amils* and others.
13. Register showing the receipts and disbursements of the Imperial Treasury (*khizana-i-amira*).
14. Register showing the salary demand of the *naqdi mansabdars*, *mahiyanahdars* and *rozinadars*.
15. Register of the jail in which the convicts sentenced to imprisonment by the *Diwan's* court were kept.
16. The following papers were maintained in the office of the *Diwan-i-Suba* :
  - (1) Register of the orders issued from the *Diwan's* office and the replies received therein.
  - (2) An abstract account of the receipts and disbursements and *awarja* bearing the seal of the *Karori*.
  - (3) *Dastur-ul-amals* of *parganas* showing assessment made under the heads *mal*, *hububat* and *sair jihat*.
  - (4) *Muwazina* of the *parganas* from the beginning of the



- reign bearing the signature of the *Qanungos*.
- (5) Register showing *inam* and *nankar* grants made to the *Chaudaris*, the *Qanungos* and the *Mugaddam* etc.
  - (6) Price-list of commodities bearing the seal of the *Nirkh Nawis* or price reporter.
  - (7) Register pertaining to the Treasury and *tumars* showing *jama* and *mujmal* or an abstract account of receipts and disbursements bearing the seal of the *Amin* and the *Mushrif*.
  - (8) List of the papers sent from the *parganas* to the Revenue Ministry, bearing the seal of the senders.
  - (9) List of *Amils* who were appointed and of those who were dismissed.
  - (10) *Awarja* of government dues against the *Amils* and the *zamindars*.
  - (11) Register showing the arrears of the past years in an abstract form.
  - (12) Petitions and letters of the *Amils* and others sent from the *parganas*.
  - (13) Register showing the *aima* grants containing the copies of the *farmans* and *parwanas* issued from the Revenue Ministry, and *tashihas* issued by the provincial *Sadr*.
  - (14) List of the *mansabdars* stationed in the province.
  - (15) Register dealing with the mints in the province.

1. *Khulasat-us-Siyag* ff. 16 ab ; cf. *Farhang-i-Kardani*, ff. 31b, 32a.



# APPENDIX E

Province	Source	Date	Jama figures in dams
Bengal	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1595-96 A.D.	59,84,59,399
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	50,00,00,000
	<i>Datur-ul-Amal-i-Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	52,46,36,104
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	45,78,58,000
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb.	52,46,36,240
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb.	17,28,41,000
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadurshah's reign	17,28,41,000
	<i>Dar Ilm-i-Navisin-digi</i>	1711 A.D.	72,71,91,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	52,37,39,110
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Mohd. Shah's reign	46,29,10,515
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	49,29,10,515
Orissa	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1695-96 A.D.	—
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1647-48 A.D.	20,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	18,41,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	12,55,80,000
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	—
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	17,28,41,000
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadurshah's reign	17,28,41,000
	<i>Dar-ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	19,20,00,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	19,71,00,000



<i>Province</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Jama figures in dams</i>
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd Shah's reign	18,97,70,590
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	17,18,41,000
Bihar	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1595-96 A.D.	22,19,19,404
	<i>Iqbal Nama</i>	1605 A.D.	26,27,74,167
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	40,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Shahanshahi</i>	1738-58 A.D.	39,43,44,532
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	54,53,00,935
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	42,71,81,000
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	39,43,44,532
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	39,43,44,532
	<i>Dar-ilm-i-Navisidingi</i>	1711 A.D.	37,32,00,000
	<i>Mahumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	37,17,97,019
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd. Shah's reign	37,17,30,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	39,43,44,532
Awadh	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1595-96 A.D.	20,19,58,172
	<i>Iqbal Nama</i>	1605 A.D.	22,98,65,014
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	30,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	27,95,79,619
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	30,39,82,859
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	32,13,17,119
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	47,95,79,619
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahdur Shah's reign	27,95,79,619
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	25,82,00,000
	<i>Mahumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	32,00,72,193
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd Shah's reign	—
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	27,95,79,619



Province	Source	Date	Jama figures in dams
Allahabad	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1595-96 A.D.	21,24,27,819
	<i>Iqbal Nama</i>	1605 A.D.	30,43,55,746
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	40,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	42,23,46,627
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	52,78,81,196
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	45,65,43,278
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	42,23,36,622
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	42,23,46,628
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	37,88,00,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	43,66,88,072
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd. Shah's reign	30,75,20,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	42,23,46,627
Agra	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1695-96 A.D.	54,62,50,304
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	90,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	96,12,67,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	1,36,46,02,117
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	1,14,17,00,157
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	—
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	96,12,57,015
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	1,00,90,00,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	1,05,17,09,283
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd Shah's reign	97,56,93,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	96,12,66,805
Delhi	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1695-96 A.D.	60,16,15,555
	<i>Iqbal Nama</i>	1605 A.D.	62,62,33,956



<i>Province</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Jama figures in dams</i>
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	1,00,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shahinshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	1,22,29,50,137
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	1,55,88,39,107
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	1,22,29,50,177
	<i>Khulasat-uis-Syaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	1,22,19,50,137
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	1,22,19,50,137
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	78,20,00,00,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	1,16,83,98,263
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd Shah's reign	94,93,45,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	1,22,29,50,137
Lahore	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1695-96 A.D.	55,94,58,423
	<i>Iqbal Nama</i>	1605 A.D.	64,67,30,311
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	90,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shahinshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	89,30,39,339
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	1,08,97,59,776
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	89,89,32,170
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	89,30,39,039
	<i>Haqiqat-i-ami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	99,30,37,519
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	93,48,00,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	90,70,16,125
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd. Shah's reign	95,65,70,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	96,30,39,319
Multan	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1595-96 A.D.	15,14,03,619
	<i>Iqbal Nama</i>	1605 A.D.	25,39,64,173



Province	Source	Date	Jama figures in dams
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	28,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	21,98,02,368
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	33,84,21,718
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	21,43,49,896
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyah</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	21,77,02,418
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	21,98,02,718
	<i>Dar-ilm-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	22,55,00,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	24,53,18,575
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd. Shah's reign	23,95,60,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	21,98,02,418
Thathah	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1595-96 A.D.	
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1846-47 A.D.	8,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shahanshahi</i>	1838-50 A.D.	6,01,388
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	8,92,30,000
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	6,88,16,810
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyah</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	—
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	6,30,81,587
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	9,28,00,000
	<i>Malumat ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	9,49,86,900
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd. Shah's reign	4,51,95,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	6,30,81,388
Kashmir	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1595-96 A.D.	7,46,70,411
	<i>Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri</i>		7,29,21,976
			7,46,70,411



<i>Province</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Jama figures in dams</i>
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	15,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-- Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	25,79,11,306
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	11,43,90,000
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	22,49,11,687
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	27,79,10,397
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	27,29,21,397
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	14,02,00,000
	<i>Malumat ul Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	21,30,74,826
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir- Khani</i>	Muhd. Shah's reign	12,62,85,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	27,79,21,397
Kabul	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1595-96 A.D.	7,46,70,411
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1846-47 A.D.	1,60,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	20,11,81,642
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	19,70,78,000
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year or Aurangzeb	16,10,49,354
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	20,20,81,642
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	11,21,81,642
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	13,09,00,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	15,76,25,380
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd' Shah's reign	19,24,18,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	20,21,81,642
Ajmer	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1695-96 A.D.	28,84,01,557
	<i>Iqbal Nama</i>	1605 A.D.	30,99,17,724
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	55,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	60,29,80,270



<i>Province</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Jama figures in dams</i>
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	64,86,61,658
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	85,26,45,702
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyag</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	60,29,80,270
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	1,29,80,270
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	87,00,00,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	63,68,94,800
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd Shah's reign	—
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	60,29,80,270
Malwa	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1595-96 A.D.	24,06,95,052
	<i>Iqbal Nama</i>	1605 A.D.	25,73,78,201
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	46,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	40,83,46,925
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	39,85,00,000
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	40,39,80,658
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyag</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	40,83,46,718
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	40,83,46,713
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	39,85,00,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	42,54,86,670
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir Khani</i>	Muhd. Shah's reign	33,90,10,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	40,83,46,818
Gujrat	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1595-96 A.D.	43,68,22,301
	<i>Iqbal Nama</i>	1605 A.D.	46,91,59,624
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	53,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	53,85,25,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i-Alamgiri</i>	1558-59 A.D.	86,92,88,069



<i>Province</i>	<i>Source</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Jama figures in dams</i>
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	45,47,42,153
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	53,65,25,000
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	53,65,25,000
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	53,00,00,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	1713 A.D.	44,83,83,096
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir- Khani</i>	Muhd. Shah's reign	46,51,50,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	53,65,25,000
Berar	<i>Ain-i-Akbari</i>	1595-96 A.D.	64,00,00,000
	<i>Badshah Nama</i>	1646-47 A.D.	55,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Alam-i- Shahanshahi</i>	1638-50 A.D.	—
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Alamgiri</i>	1658-59 A.D.	92,65,46,000
	<i>Zawabit-i-Alamgiri</i>	31-35 regnal year of Aurangzeb	92,65,45,000
	<i>Khulasat-us-Siyaq</i>	41 regnal year of Aurangzeb	92,65,45,000
	<i>Haqiqat-i-Dami</i>	Bahadur Shah's reign	92,65,45,000
	<i>Dar-Ilm-i-Navisindigi</i>	1711 A.D.	63,50,00,000
	<i>Malumat-ul-Afaq</i>	Muhd. Shah's reign	95,00,00,000
	<i>Tarikh-i-Shakir- Khani</i>	Muhd' Shah's reign	95,00,00,000
	<i>Dastur-ul-Amal-i- Ghulam Ahmad</i>	1748 A.D.	92,65,45,000



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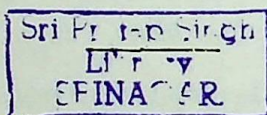
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40	5	state	State
43	2	<i>sait jihat</i>	<i>sair jihat</i>
43	18	Siaq	<i>Siyaq</i>
45	27	in a raising	in raising
52	28	village ;	village,
56	7	Awodh	Awadh
57	f.n.	<i>Ama'-i-Bekas</i>	<i>Amal-i-Bekas</i>
58	4	<i>Siyaa</i>	<i>Siyaq</i>
61	15	<i>Faujdar</i>	<i>Faujdar</i>
64	18	assigument	assignment
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73	9	and been	had been
80	20	<i>Farhang-i-Kardani</i>	the <i>Farhang-i-Kardarni</i>
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